

TIME

the
BEST
of **FALL**

MARGARET ATWOOD

THE
RELUCTANT
PROPHET

PLUS

MICHAEL B. JORDAN,
RYAN MURPHY
& MORE



TIME

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Britain's iconic Houses
of Parliament need not
just a face-lift but a gut
renovation

Photograph by
Ben Quinton for *TIME*



ON THE COVERS:
Photographs by
Mickalene Thomas
for *TIME*

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Conversation



WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT...

THE LEFT BEHIND ECONOMY Alana Semuels and Malcolm Burnley's Sept. 2/Sept. 9 cover story on life as a tipped worker on minimum wage inspired readers with experience waiting tables to dish on the realities of the job. Walter V. Guittard of Fort Myers, Fla., thought he and his wife were "lucky" to retire from the restaurant industry at 65 after working for 35 years, but "waiting tables ain't what it used to be." Some readers who work in restaurants said they like relying on tips, which they feel allows them to earn more than they would with a set salary. Michelle Pendergrass, who was a server in Seattle and Bonita Springs, Fla., said she'd found people tip the same regardless of the minimum wage. But Grace Aspinall of Clifton, Va.—who once got a \$2 tip on a \$118 bill—had sympathy for the people in the story, and a plea for everyone else: Add \$5 to whatever you were going to tip, "because these people work so darn hard."

'All jobs should be good jobs.'

TAMARA DRAUT,
New York City

OCTOPUS' GARDEN In the same issue, Tik Root's feature on the race to build a commercial octopus farm shocked some readers. Given our knowledge about sentient species, Annoula Wylderich of Las Vegas thought it "callous" to "grow" them like crops. Cathy Wallach of New York City said such an effort was ironic amid increased awareness of the effects of factory farming, and Franziska Edwards of Seattle found it a "horrifying" example of humans trying "to have their cake and eat it too" by "dodging the effects of over-fishing" without cutting consumption. "Should humans grow octopus?"

'Avarice too often trumps our common sense.'

ELAINE LIVESEY-FASSEL,
Los Angeles

At least the question is being asked," wrote Mary Lynne Zahler of North Canton, Ohio, who noted the importance of thinking about where food comes from.

Behind the Cover

HOLLYWOOD MOMENT In a new video on TIME.com, actor Michael B. Jordan (*below*) talks about how "intimidating" it is to play someone as accomplished as real-life civil rights lawyer Bryan Stevenson, whom Jordan depicts in the upcoming legal drama *Just Mercy*. "I want people to think. I want people to ask questions ... feel inspired and feel optimistic that you can make a difference," he says about the impact he hopes the film will have. See the full interview—and more video from the Fall Arts Preview—at time.com/entertainment

CAPTURING THE MAGIC Each of this week's three cover subjects—Jordan, author Margaret Atwood and showrunner Ryan Murphy—was photographed by American visual artist Mickalene Thomas, whose 2008 screen print of First Lady Michelle Obama is held in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery.



TIME FOR KIDS As students return to school, TFK offers them and their families more to learn. This week on timeforkids.com, find news for kids about fires in the Amazon, Lego's plan for Braille Bricks and more.

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'His is a government with no mandate, no morals and, as of today, no majority.'

JEREMY CORBYN, leader of Britain's opposition Labour Party, on Sept. 3, when Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative Party lost its majority after one lawmaker defected and 21 were expelled for joining a rebel bid to make a "no deal" Brexit illegal

'If you don't go out holding your girlfriend's hand in public, you might get a Marvel movie.'

KRISTEN STEWART, star of the upcoming *Charlie's Angels* movie, to *Harper's Bazaar*, on pressure to downplay her sexuality

'DETAILS ARE IRRELEVANT IN TERMS OF DECISION-MAKING.'

JOE BIDEN, former Vice President and 2020 presidential candidate, arguing on Sept. 3 that his habit of mixing up names and dates doesn't affect his judgment; his statement came after the *Washington Post* reported that a war story he told combined details from at least three different events

'The definition of an athlete is someone who on the court treats you like your worst enemy but off the court can be your best friend.'

COCO GAUFF, tennis player, on opponent Naomi Osaka, who consoled the 15-year-old after beating her at the U.S. Open on Aug. 31

'I affirm our lasting responsibility.'

FRANK-WALTER STEINMEIER, German President, at a Sept. 1 ceremony marking the 80th anniversary of the invasion of Poland



96

Age of the oldest active male scuba diver, WW II vet Ray Woolley, who plunged 42.4 m (nearly 140 ft.) for 48 min. to mark his Aug. 28 birthday, beating his personal record by 1.8 m and 4 min.

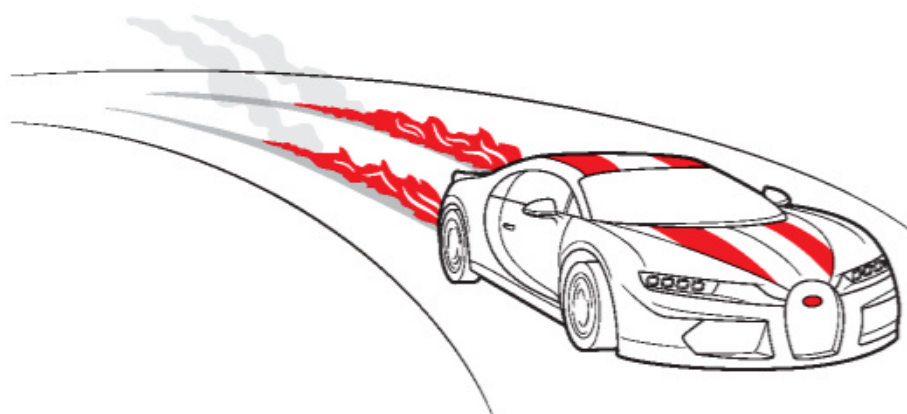
Ariana Grande
She's suing Forever 21, arguing it used a model that looked like her on social media



Taylor Swift
With *Lover*, she scores the biggest sales week for any album since 2017's *Reputation*

304.8

Speed in m.p.h. achieved by Bugatti's new sports car in a test track in the German town of Ehra-Lessien



GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE



The Golden Gate Bridge was financed with municipal bonds.

ALSO KEPT TAXES AT BAY

Dubbed one of the 'Wonders of the Modern World', the Golden Gate Bridge opened to the public on May 27, 1937. At the time, it was both the longest and the tallest suspension bridge in the world, with a main span of 4,200 feet and a total height of 746 feet. It is still the tallest bridge in the United States, transporting 110,000 vehicles every day. To help raise the \$35 million it cost to build, the authorities in California issued tax-free municipal bonds.

Still Going Strong

And, just like that iconic structure, municipal bonds are still going strong today as a way for investors to invest in civic projects, while earning income that's free of federal taxes and potentially state taxes.

Many US investors use municipal bonds as part of their retirement planning. Here's why:

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The Brief



MADE IN CHINA
An employee works at a factory in Qiqihar, China, on Aug. 27, days before new U.S. tariffs on Chinese imports kicked in

INSIDE

THE PEOPLE LEFT OUT WHEN
INDIA COUNTS RESIDENTS

BEHIND THE MOVEMENT NOT
TO NAME MASS SHOOTERS

THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF
RHODA'S VALERIE HARPER

PHOTOGRAPH BY WANG JIANWEI

ECONOMY

As trade war escalates, pocketbooks suffer

By Charlie Campbell/Beijing

TO MANUFACTURE FLAT-ROLLED STEEL, you need to start with a steel slab. For a company called NLMK USA, which makes carbon flat-rolled steel in Farrell, Pa., there's nowhere to get those slabs domestically. That's meant it has to source them from China—and pay a 25% import tariff—or find an overseas supplier exempt from the tariffs. Meanwhile, prices have climbed as companies in the same situation scramble to find new supplies. As its costs rise, NLMK USA is taking fewer orders and running fewer shifts. “It's made it very difficult for us to compete,” says Bob Miller, president and CEO of NLMK USA.

The Trump tariffs that have already led to cutbacks across the U.S. were joined on Sept. 1 by a new round of 15% levies on more than \$125 billion in imports, from wireless headphones to lawn mowers. This brings the average tax on Chinese imports up to 21.2% from just 3.1% when Donald Trump entered the White House, per the Peterson Institute for International Economics. American businesses like NLMK USA are being drafted into the trade war whether they like it or not. “[This hike] is going to have a bigger negative effect on the U.S. economy than any of Trump's previous increases,” says James H. Nolt, a senior fellow at the World Policy Institute. “This is hitting the United States where it's particularly vulnerable right now.”

In retaliation, Beijing on Sept. 1 began imposing additional tariffs on 1,717 U.S. exports, such as soybeans and car parts. While European exporters say they're being offered incentives to set up in a newly expanded free trade zone in Shanghai, their American competitors are complaining of increased red tape. Beijing's 5% levy on American crude oil marks the first time the fuel has been in the crosshairs since the world's two biggest economies began their tussle over trade more than a year ago.

The Chinese economy is also feeling the pinch. Growth in its manufacturing sector slowed in August for the fourth month in a row, and Trump has also threatened to use emergency presidential powers to force American companies out of China. On Sept. 2, China's Commerce Ministry complained to the World Trade Organization that the new tariffs “severely violated” a truce that Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to at the G-20 summit in Osaka in June. “It's costly for China and the whole global economy,” says Susan Shirk, chair

of the 21st Century China Center at the University of California, San Diego, School of Global Policy and Strategy. “It's really slowing down human progress in so many ways.”

Far from nearing an amiable conclusion, the trade war has now reached the stage where “each side [is] defending itself and figuring out how to impose costs on the other,” says Paul Haenle, a former White House adviser under the Obama and Bush Administrations and current chair of the Beijing-based Carnegie-Tsinghua Center. The question is how much both the U.S. and China can lose and still declare victory.

TRADE'S FUNCTION as a political cudgel has lately seen a renaissance, as evidenced by its use in situations like Japan and South Korea's escalating dispute over reparations for historic abuses during Japanese colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. But even as the tactic grows in popularity, its usefulness remains in question—especially given the increased risk of trade wars' fueling diplomatic or even military confrontations.

Trump's hard line with China is popular with his base, and even some Chinese business leaders quietly praise the U.S. President for pushing Beijing to enact what they consider to be much needed reforms to the state-oriented economy. But there is little sign China plans to enact the sweeping systemic changes to its policies on intellectual property, forced technology transfers, market access and industrial subsidies that would appease the Trump Administration. Beijing has consistently denied Washington's accusations that it engages in unfair trade practices, and portrays the U.S. as the aggressor. In uncharacteristically spiky rhetoric, state news wire Xinhua accused the U.S. of “acting as a ‘school bully’” in a Sept. 1 op-ed.

It's also unclear what exactly Trump hopes to achieve. He wants China to cut assistance for state-run companies, for example. But it's unlikely that doing so would address the \$419 billion U.S. trade deficit with China, which the President claims costs American jobs. Around 80% of China's exports come from the purely private sector, and almost half from multinationals like Walmart that simply manufacture in China, according to Nolt.

Ironically, economists say the only way to really bring that figure down would be for the Chinese state to intervene to artificially stymie trade with the U.S. “What Trump really wants is way beyond China's capacity to give,” says Nolt.

And so the trade war rumbles on. Further tariff increases are expected in October and December, encompassing almost everything China sells to the U.S., from golf shoes to iPhones. If they're enacted, new research by University College London and the London School of Economics shows, Americans could lose something else this year: up to \$970 per household. —*With reporting by* ALANA SEMUELS/SAN FRANCISCO

15%

Tariff rate on \$125 billion of Chinese imports to the U.S., as of Sept. 1

584

Percent increase in the average tariff on Chinese imports since Trump took office

\$75B

Value of U.S. exports subject to retaliatory Chinese tariffs announced last month



LOST AT SEA James Miranda, a resident of Santa Barbara, Calif., mourns on Sept. 2 at a harbor near where an early-morning fire sank a boat of recreational scuba divers with more than 30 people trapped below deck. Rescue workers searched the waters around Santa Cruz Island where the *Conception* sank, but by the following day, all 34 remaining people who had been onboard were presumed dead and it appeared that only the boat's five crew members had escaped.

THE BULLETIN

India's register of citizens leaves nearly 2 million people off the list—and at risk

WHEN INDIA'S NATIONAL REGISTER OF Citizens (NRC) was published on Aug. 31, after a six-year effort to catalog all legal residents of the state of Assam, some 1.9 million people—mostly Bengali speakers accused of being “infiltrators” from Bangladesh—were left off the list. Their exclusion, the first step in an experiment the Indian government says it wants to replicate nationwide, puts them at risk of statelessness. Rights groups warn it could also presage a humanitarian crisis in the world's largest democracy.

CITIZENS OF NOWHERE To be deemed a true citizen, residents of Assam had to provide documentation dating prior to March 24, 1971, the day before the eruption of a war with East Pakistan that spurred a wave of migration. Rights groups say that burden of proof is too high for many families that don't keep meticulous records dating back nearly half a century, and especially for women, the illiterate and people who have fled persecution.

STRUCK OFF The NRC process in Assam has roots in a history of acute anxiety about successive waves of immigration to the state by Bengali speakers, many of whom are Muslim. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, he seized on the issue, which dovetailed with his Hindu-nationalist message: that India's Hindus are being displaced by Muslims, who make up 14% of India's population.

WHAT NEXT It's unclear if India can actually expel people, as most people left off the NRC hold no other citizenship. It would be illegal under humanitarian law for India to make them stateless, and Bangladesh is unlikely to accept the people India attempts to deport. With thousands already detained in Assam, at least 10 new detention camps are being built, and family separations seem likely. And the government still wants to roll out the NRC nationwide. “We will,” Home Minister Amit Shah said, “remove every single infiltrator.” —BILLY PERRIGO

NEWS TICKER

Iran says no to bilateral talks with U.S.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said that he'd never hold bilateral talks with the U.S., and that **dialogue on reviving a nuclear deal could resume only if the U.S. lifted all sanctions on Iran.** His Sept. 3 announcement came alongside reports that French President Emmanuel Macron offered Iran \$15 billion in credit to keep the old deal alive.

Pence stays at Trump golf club in Ireland

Vice President Mike Pence stayed at President Trump's private golf club during an official trip to Ireland **at Trump's “suggestion,”** Pence Chief of Staff Marc Short said on Sept. 3. Facing criticism of taxpayer funds going to the President's business, the Vice President defended the move as “logical.”

Italy leaves right-wing party out

The anti-establishment Five Star Movement in Italy **backed a coalition with its former political rival, the center-left Democratic Party,** in order to keep the far-right League out of power. Led by Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, the new government is to be sworn in on Sept. 5.

NEWS TICKER

Trump halts deportation of sick migrants

The Trump Administration backtracked Sept. 2 on its decision to start forcing out migrants who had previously been allowed to stay while **receiving lifesaving medical treatment in the U.S.** The protections for sick migrants and their family members had been quietly ended in August.

U.N. report spreads blame on Yemen

A Sept. 3 U.N. report found that the U.S., the U.K., France and Iran may be **complicit in potential war crimes in Yemen** by arming the Saudi-led coalition in its fight against Houthi rebels there. The report came two days after a coalition airstrike on a Houthi prison killed more than 100 people.

Harvard frosh allowed U.S. entry

Ismail Ajjawi, a Palestinian refugee and Harvard freshman, was denied entry to the U.S. in August after, he says, **Customs and Border Protection officials questioned his friends' social-media activity.** Ajjawi had been sent back to Lebanon but was allowed into the U.S. on Sept. 2—just in time to start classes.

GOOD QUESTION

Can refusing to name mass shooters help prevent violence?

AFTER AN AUG. 31 MASS SHOOTING IN WEST Texas, as questions swirled about the event that had left seven people dead and 22 injured, Odessa police chief Michael Gerke declared that one question would remain unanswered: the shooter's identity.

"I'm not going to give him any notoriety for what he did," Gerke said at a press conference on Sept. 1. Later that day, however, other law-enforcement officials identified the gunman, who had been killed by police.

Police officers and media outlets are increasingly choosing to downplay the identities of perpetrators to avoid potentially inspiring others to carry out similar atrocities. Following an armed rampage in a Virginia Beach municipal center in late May that left 12 dead, Virginia Beach police chief James Cervera said authorities would mention the gunman's name only once, "and then he will be forever referred to as 'the suspect'" to keep the focus on the victims. And after a terrorist attack on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, in March, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern refused to mention the perpetrator's name at all.

"Publishing the names and photos of these perpetrators often essentially reward[s] them with fame and attention," says Adam Lankford, a criminology professor at the University of Alabama who has written

extensively on mass shooters. "They accurately recognize that the more victims you kill, the more attention you get."

The numbers may support that idea. "Widespread national media attention paid to these events may be playing some role in actually precipitating some of the events," explains Sherry Towers, a researcher at Arizona State University who published a 2015 paper on the contagion effect in mass shootings.

Yet simply erasing shooters' names is unlikely to solve the problem, and experts note that the decision must be balanced against other factors, like the public's right to know. "What like-minded individuals applaud is the act, not the actor," says James Alan Fox, who teaches criminology at Northeastern University and has authored numerous books on mass killings. He says that the contagion effect has little to do with naming perpetrators and showing their photos, and that a bigger problem is a tendency for media to describe shooters in a way that makes them seem larger than life.

Others believe focusing on how to talk about mass shootings detracts from the primary factor that studies suggest is most likely to drive such violence: easy access to guns. Towers' 2015 study of mass shootings looked at correlations between gun violence and two things often blamed for it. "We found there was no relationship to mental illness, but we found that there was a very significant relationship to the prevalence of firearm ownership," Towers says. "We hypothesize that media is playing a role, but it certainly is not the only dynamic that's going on."

—ALEJANDRO DE LA GARZA

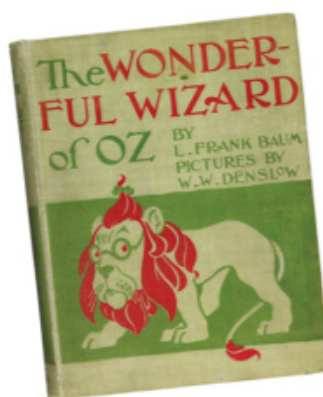
BANNED BOOKS

Surprising censorship

A Tennessee Catholic school, it was reported Aug. 31, banned *Harry Potter* books for containing "actual curses and spells." Here, other unpredictable prose prohibitions. —Suyin Haynes

WITCH HUNT

The classic *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was written by L. Frank Baum in 1900 in Chicago, but 28 years later, the city's public library banned the book, partly for showing women (including witches) as leaders.



TOO ADVENTUROUS

Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*—and its wealth of talking creatures—was banned in China in 1931 under an official mandate that it was wrong for animals to speak human languages.

TOPLESS TROUBLE

Where's Waldo? was one of the most frequently challenged books in the U.S. from 1990 to 1999—all because it included a cartoon depicting the side of a woman's breast, measuring 1/16th of an inch on the page.

Milestones

RULED

That **North Carolina's state legislative maps** are an unconstitutional gerrymander, by a three-judge panel in Raleigh on Sept. 3.

SETTLED

Google, with the Federal Trade Commission, for \$170 million—a record fine—over allegations that YouTube invaded children's privacy.

REACHED

An **agreement "in principle"** between the U.S. and the Taliban, U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad said on Sept. 2. If the deal succeeds, it could herald the end of America's longest-running war.

ANNOUNCED

That former leaders of the Colombian guerrilla group **FARC will be returning to war**, they said in a video posted Aug. 29. The group's current political leader said he is still committed to peace.

ARRESTED

Opposition activists who have led recent street protests in Moscow, by police on Sept. 2, ahead of local and regional elections Sept. 8.

TARGETED

Immigrants from other African countries, in violent riots in Johannesburg on Sept. 1 and 2. At least five people were killed and 189 arrested.

REQUESTED

That customers **no longer openly carry firearms** in stores, by Walmart and Kroger on Sept. 3, following a series of mass shootings in the U.S.



Harper's Rhoda headscarf—seen here in a mid-1970s publicity still from the show—became her signature look

DIED

Valerie Harper

TV's pioneering real woman

OVER THE COURSE OF SIX DECADES IN SHOW BUSINESS, Valerie Harper played dozens of roles. Even after receiving a cancer diagnosis in 2009, she kept popping up, delightfully, in film, TV and on the stage, where she started out as a chorus girl in the late 1950s. But the actor, who died on Aug. 30 at 80, will be remembered most for her irresistible performance as Rhoda Morgenstern, the mouthy, vivacious neighbor of television's original single career girl, Mary Richards.

First on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, then as the lead in hit spin-off *Rhoda*, Harper spent the '70s embodying a relatable foil to Moore's aspirational hero. Like so many young women of her generation, Rhoda—a frank, neurotic Bronx Jew with a self-deprecating sense of humor—both benefited from and struggled with unprecedented independence. Despite her outward bravado, she wrestled with body-image issues. She got married, then survived divorce in an era when such splits remained stigmatized, even as they were growing more common.

And if Mary Richards begat Carrie Bradshaw and Ally McBeal, then it was Rhoda Morgenstern who paved the way for the lovably flawed female characters who've ruled sitcoms for the past decade: Liz Lemon, Mindy Lahiri, Issa Dee. Harper won four Emmys for the role, but the awards won't define her legacy. Rather, she will be remembered for the estimable extent to which she broadened and humanized the representation of women. To see her impact, just turn on your TV.

—JUDY BERMAN

DIED

Peter Lindbergh

Fashion visionary

THE ERA OF THE SUPER-model began with one image: models Linda Evangelista, Christy Turlington, Naomi Campbell (*in portrait below*), Cindy Crawford and Tatjana Patitz on the cover of the January 1990 issue of *British Vogue*. The man who brought them together was German photographer Peter Lindbergh, whose monochromatic interpretation of high-low glamour launched the women to international superstardom. In doing so, he changed the visual culture of contemporary fashion.

Lindbergh, who died Sept. 3 at 74, was one of the industry's most trusted photographers. His affinity for shooting in black and white was as well-known as his distaste for ageism and artifice. He championed women as they were, in stripped-down yet elegant portraits, intimate images that defied the shallowness often associated with fashion. The world may look for "perfection and youth," he told *TIME* in 2016, but beauty "is about emotions." Lindbergh photographed the world's most famous faces—but in his pursuit of real beauty, what he was really looking for was soul. —CADY LANG



Former U.N. ambassador **Samantha Power** has a lot of stories to tell—and no problem talking

By **Belinda Luscombe**

“I BELIEVE IN OVERSHARING,” SAYS SAMANTHA Power. She’s not kidding. Her answer to the journalistic equivalent of a warm-up pitch—So how’s teaching going?—is 16 minutes long and touches her views on geopolitics, Ebola, diplomacy, Facebook, President Trump, President Obama, U.S. leadership, the importance of expertise, disillusionment and optimism in the Harvard student body, the U.N., human rights, climate change, China, Bosnia, political prisoners and being Irish.

Perhaps noticing the mild panic in my eyes as my brain tries to process even half of it, she checks herself. “Sorry,” she says. “I’m going to get more succinct with the passage of time.” This was to be the only verifiable falsehood of the whole day.

Power, for those who’ve forgotten, was the human-rights shield-maiden who served in the Obama Administration, first as a member of the National Security Council and eventually as U.S. ambassador to the U.N. She was an unlikely pick because, after her years as a war correspondent, she was the opposite of diplomatic in the criticism she ladled out to prior U.S. administrations in her best-selling and Pulitzer Prize-winning account of the Bosnian war, *A Problem From Hell*. Also because she was memorably fired from then Senator Obama’s presidential campaign when she called Hillary Clinton “a monster” in front of a reporter.

Her new book, *The Education of an Idealist*, sounds like it’s going to be the tale of what happens when journalistic rubber meets administrative and political road, when the finger pointer becomes the appointee and finds out how hard it is to solve anything. Power dispenses with that notion in the book and in person. Instead, she insists, “It’s about how you get better at prosecuting your idealism.”

A combination of memoir, treatise and call to action, *Education* explains quite a lot about the passion that has animated Power’s endeavors. In her telling, both her parents were brilliant and loving, but her father was an alcoholic. A few years after they split and she moved from Ireland to the U.S. with her mother, who is a kidney specialist, he died, alone and broke. It suddenly dawned on Power that she had made scant effort to make sure he was O.K. It’s almost as if she decided, at age 14, never to make scant effort again.

While her life since then looks strategic and linear, Power spent her early years hopping onto

POWER’S POLICIES

Libya

She was prominent in getting the Obama Administration to intervene in Libya, which led to the toppling of Muammar Gaddafi.

Syria

The U.S. stood by despite her entreaties. “Syria is the one where I think: Is there something I could have argued differently?” she says.

America

“There’s no other country,” she says, “that is going to be the team captain mobilizing solutions to the toughest problems.”

different lily pads in the human-rights pond, from journalism to law to academia to nonprofits. Only after one of her bosses mentioned that his kid was Obama’s roommate at Occidental College and could give him a copy of *A Problem From Hell* did things begin to stream into place, both professionally and personally. “But for Bosnia, there’s no book,” says Power. “But for the book, there’s no Obama. But for Obama, there’s no Cass. But for Cass, there’s no kids.”

Cass is her husband, Cass Sunstein, 64, another appealingly earnest nerd, former player in the Obama Administration, best-selling author and professor at Harvard. He’s in India for the week, lecturing. The kids are Declan, 10, and Rian, 7, both born while she worked at the White House. Power, 49, admits to bingeing on whatever time she can get with her children now, having been absent from more of their earlier life than she liked. Her working-mom anecdotes are not like other people’s: “I’m on the phone,” during talks on Russian sanctions, she says, “and Declan is frustrated yet again that he can’t get my attention and he marches away saying, ‘Putin, Putin, Putin! When is it going to be Declan, Declan, Declan?’” People laugh at that tale, she says, “in a way that I haven’t quite figured out.”

She brings the same skill set to bear on parenting that she uses in her work: doggedness, persuasion, a penchant for a story. Her son is an enthusiastic baseball player, and she coaxes him into spending some of his rare downtime before tennis camp in the leafy yard of their historic Concord, Mass., home, playing ball with her. A sports nut, she does not let him off easy, even calling an imaginary game as he pitches.

While she loves being with her kids and teaching, Power admits when pushed that her favorite job was at the U.N. Her successes there were not, on the surface, enormous. She did not broker peace in Syria, and she acknowledges that the Obama Administration backed the wrong horse in Yemen, which became even more of a human-rights travesty after President Trump took office and doubled down on that bet. “We are complicit in systematic war crimes,” she says of the situation there.

But the response to the 2014 Ebola epidemic proved that the same scramble-the-jets approach America used for warfare could be—and should be—deployed for humanitarian purposes. “So few threats stay confined within any one country,” she says, that it’s simply pragmatic to work with other countries to nip crises in the bud, even if it doesn’t initially seem to be in America’s national interest.

Her other abiding lesson from that time, the one she passes on to her students, is that it’s O.K., as she titles one chapter, to “shrink the change,” to not expect everything to happen at once. “Sweeping change,” she notes, “actually usually comes as a



result of incremental changes.” By way of example, she points to a small initiative she undertook to try to combat the global rise of despots and the concurrent democratic recession. She and her team found 20 female human-rights activists who were in prison and set about bringing awareness to their stories. Eventually 16 were released. The number was tiny but demonstrated “the most powerful superpower in the history of the world, if it puts its mind to it, and is respectful of culture and building coalitions, is able to use its tremendous leverage” for small but significant acts too.

POWER HAS AN ALMOST ENDEARING WAY of not quite understanding the effect she’s having on people. She seems oblivious as to how her height, blaze of red hair, deep voice, résumé or intensity might make others feel inferior. After leaving a prestigious position at Harvard to work in Obama’s senatorial office, she inadvertently came across a chat between two colleagues that described her as attention-seeking and snotty. “I was shocked,” she says. “I didn’t think of myself as high and mighty.

‘Putin, Putin, Putin! When is it going to be Declan, Declan, Declan?’

DECLAN POWER SUNSTEIN, Power’s son, on his mother’s work-life balance

I hated that that was the impression that I was leaving.” During our interview, she gets so excited about a story, she grabs my copy of her book to read the passage and begins to tear up as she reads her own words.

Refreshingly, all that diplomatic training has not made Power self-conscious or killed her taste for the overshare. She reveals some secrets of an unnamed ex-boyfriend—and puts just enough information in the book to make it possible to Google who he is. And when discussing how Obama’s upcoming memoir will perform compared to his wife’s monster best seller, she says wryly, “I’m sure he hasn’t noticed. He’s not competitive at all.”

In so many ways, Power is like America. She has impressive resources, a lot of high ideals and enough belief in herself to go it alone, if necessary. “I believe that individuals can make a profound difference,” says Power. “I’ve seen it.” Idealists have been having a bit of a rough time of it recently, jostled aside by ideologues and realists and autocrats, but Power is holding fast. Like the U.S., her record is not unblemished, but she’s still swinging. □

LightBox

In full flood

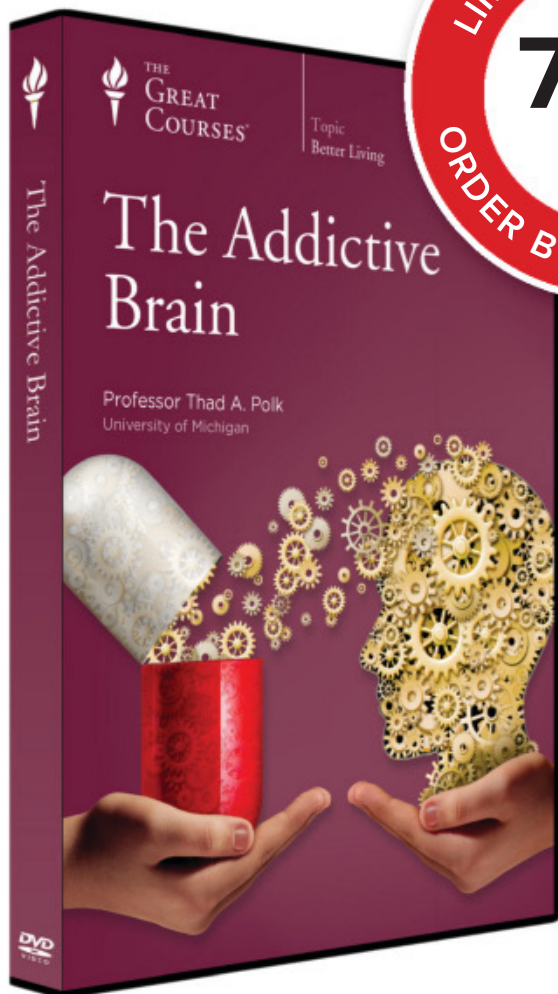
Through the wind and rain of Hurricane Dorian, volunteers walk a flooded road in Freeport, on the island of Grand Bahama, after rescuing several families that arrived in the area on small boats on Sept. 3. The storm tore through the Bahamas as a Category 5 hurricane at the end of Labor Day weekend—only the second of that intensity to make landfall there since 1983—and reached record sustained wind speeds at its peak, leaving several dead and thousands of homes destroyed.

Photograph by Ramon Espinosa—AP

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The View

SOCIETY

THE RESILIENCE OF SNOWFLAKES

By Kate McQuade

Every September, as the first day of school approaches, I spend a lot of time thinking about darkness. Perhaps other teachers would say the same, jokingly. But I teach a high school course on trauma literature. So the question of darkness—of how much trauma to expose my students to, and why I’m doing it—is, very sincerely, on my mind. ▶

INSIDE

CHINA BIDES ITS TIME
ON HONG KONG

THERE'S NO GENDER
ISSUE IN SPACE

BREAKFAST IS THE
NEW FAMILY MEAL

TheView Opener

My students have been stereotyped as too fragile for difficult literature, too desirous of trigger warnings to survive being challenged, too self-involved to think beyond their insular bubbles and face the hard truths of the real world. In 2016, Collins Dictionary included *snowflake generation* among its Words of the Year, defining young adults of the 2010s as a group “less resilient and more prone to taking offence than previous generations.” (It also clarified, perhaps unnecessarily, that the noun is considered “informal, derogatory.”)

But after more than a decade of teaching this elective course, which covers some of the most emotionally difficult texts in contemporary literature—narratives of war, genocide, slavery and their still present aftermaths—I’m pretty sure this characterization is wrong. I’ve watched my students circle tirelessly around questions so complicated, their answers regularly elude us.

Is Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* a ghost or a real-life survivor of the Middle Passage, and what does it mean that we can’t decide between hauntedness and history? Why do so many novels about the Vietnam War center on an unsolvable mystery? “How could a hole make him feel more

full?” wonders a gunshot victim in Tommy Orange’s *There There*, and the paradox asks us to consider the many holes—historical, personal, representational—that define not only the lives of Orange’s Native American characters but also our country’s origin story.

Gaps, mysteries and missing answers are endemic in trauma literature. Absence is often made manifest because absence is representative not only of trauma but also of the American historical record that these books aim to re-examine. In the novels I teach, “truth” is almost always given the air quotes it deserves.

I BELIEVE A COMFORT with unanswerable questions is one reason my students are especially good at grappling with this literature. They recognize within it glimpses of the adult world they are about to enter—not necessarily a traumatic world, but certainly one where history is perforated, where facts are under attack. In June, the Pew Research

Center released a study finding that Americans see “made-up news” as a bigger problem than climate change, racism, sexism or terrorism. That statistic surprised me, but I doubt it would surprise my students. “In any war story,” writes Tim O’Brien in *The Things They Carried*, “but especially a true one, it’s difficult to separate what happened from what seemed to happen.” I remember one student pointing to that quote during class discussion. “That’s the danger of fake news,” he said, and the rest all nodded soberly.

My students understand that in adulthood they will be faced with multiple, often unbridgeable realities. We grownups, with our separate news stations and our ideological echo chambers and our stiflingly atomized communities, have made it that way. Their desire for trigger warnings isn’t, I think, an incurious attempt to hide from that world, but

rather to change its infrastructure in a way that allows them to navigate its increasingly uncertain terrain.

This is why every year I assign my students the most difficult books I can find. I don’t do this to traumatize them or to take a stand against trigger warnings (which

I give regularly). And I’m certainly not trying to “toughen them up.” Literature is neither contagion of nor inoculation against trauma. Literature is practice. And I want my students, through these books, to practice living. I want them to practice seeing historical gaps—the oppressed silence of untold stories—and bridging them. I want them to practice having clear and easy answers taken away so they don’t grow up to be like the rest of us, content in our echo chambers of clear and easy answers.

“But this too is true: stories can save us,” writes O’Brien in *The Things They Carried*. I hang on tight to that idea, year after year. Not because these stories will save my students. But because I’m hoping my students will grow up and save the rest of us.

McQuade, a teacher at Phillips Academy in Andover, Mass., is the author of Tell Me Who We Were



Today’s youth have been characterized as “snowflakes” lacking resilience, despite evidence to the contrary

SHORT READS

► Highlights from stories on [time.com/ideas](https://www.time.com/ideas)

Not representative

A new study has found that just 3% of protagonists in the 1,200 top films from 2007 to 2018 were Latino. **“It’s time for Hollywood to step into their power and end decades of erasure, stereotyping and marginalization,”** write actor-director Eva Longoria Baston and Stacy L. Smith, founder of the University of Southern California’s Annenberg Inclusion Initiative.

Table talk

“Climate change is becoming something you can taste,” writes Amanda Little, author of *The Fate of Food*. Crop yields are predicted to fall even as the population climbs. Still, she says, there’s hope in radically rethinking food production.

Access for all

Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee has opposed the Hyde Amendment—the law barring Medicaid from covering abortion except in cases of rape, incest or a threat to the woman’s life—since the ’70s. She’s still fighting to repeal it, but, she writes, **“equal access to health care, including abortion, is now a standard for our party as it always should have been.”**

THE RISK REPORT

China's cautious waiting game in Hong Kong

By Ian Bremmer



HONG KONG'S PROtests continue. The unrest began in response to a proposed law that would allow Hong Kong to extradite its citizens to face prosecution in mainland China's court system,

a plan that stoked fears China could use the law to seize political dissidents and journalists deemed insufficiently compliant to Beijing. But when Hong Kong's police launched a heavy-handed response to the demonstrations, the list of protester demands expanded to include police accountability and new protections for the territory's democracy. On Sept. 4, Carrie Lam, Hong Kong's beleaguered chief administrator, finally withdrew the bill. For many it will be "too little and too late now," in the words of Joshua Wong, a key figure in the protest movement.

Millions have now taken to the streets over the past 14 weeks, and a few demonstrators have resorted to violence. Some protesters are setting fires. Others have thrown bricks and even fire bombs. Police have responded with tear gas, rubber bullets and warning shots of live ammunition. Thousands of university and high school students boycotted classes to join the protests. Some organizers have called on Taiwan to grant asylum for activists.

Beijing has so far taken a cautious approach. State media has issued increasingly dire threats, and Chinese soldiers have made a show of strength. But President Xi Jinping has avoided a military crackdown. That leaves Lam to try to calm things down. For more than three months, she has failed utterly, and leaked audio emerged recently in which she told business leaders during a closed-door meeting that she would resign if she could. If Beijing's direct role in all this weren't already clear,

she's also heard on tape explaining that she "unfortunately, has to serve two masters by constitution, that is the central people's government and the people of Hong Kong." Withdrawing the extradition bill is a victory, but not enough of one to end the protests.

But things will get more difficult for the protesters from here. The protest movement does not have unified leadership. Those who want demonstrations to remain peaceful have little sway with rioters. As with the *gilets jaunes* movement in France, poorly

coordinated demands extend from the controversial to the impossible, making it hard for the movement to maintain public support indefinitely. President Xi can take his time, confident in the knowledge that people will have to return to work to make a living, and students will eventually go back to class. The economic damage to Hong Kong is already considerable.

There is also little useful international support for the demonstrations. European leaders can do no more than issue statements on the

subject, and Donald Trump has tried to keep open hopes for trade negotiations with China by protecting his relationship with Xi. Trump has publicly expressed sympathy for Xi and his Hong Kong predicament, and he's made clear he has no intention of siding with protesters.

That's part of why Xi believes he can outlast the protesters, as China did following the Umbrella Movement five years ago. Some will be tempted to fault Trump for refusing to side with those who demand democracy, but it is Xi who has fueled these protests, by his refusal to allow Lam to resign and his uncompromising approach. Many in Hong Kong believe that Beijing means to fundamentally undermine their government. It's clear that Xi won't try to persuade them otherwise. □

President Xi can take his time, confident in the knowledge that people will have to return to work to make a living, and students will eventually go back to class

QUICK TALK

No battle of the sexes in space

On Aug. 20, Vice President Mike Pence chaired a meeting of the recently revived National Space Council. There were four guest panelists. Three spoke about nuclear thermal propulsion, resource use on the moon and planetary exploration. All interesting and appropriate topics.

Then the fourth panelist spoke about gender bias and how NASA needs to—no kidding—realize there are gender differences because sending gender-diverse crews to Mars will be difficult. It was frankly hard to listen to because *enough already!*

We've been flying gender-diverse crews since 1983. Women do every job a man does in space. I could tell you tales of male engineers' original ideas of clothing and hygiene products for women astronauts, but that was the '70s. By the time I flew in space in the '90s, things changed; a crew member was just a crew member.

I fully support the goal of landing American astronauts on the moon and on Mars. I will be proud to wave that flag. Because that's the only flag we should be waving.

—Marsha Ivins, a retired astronaut, flew five space-shuttle missions



Ivins evaluates a shuttle fire extinguisher in zero-G training

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As it gets harder to gather the family for dinner, parents turn to breakfast

By Belinda Luscombe

BREAKFAST, IT IS OFT ALLEGED, IS THE most important meal of the day. Also a thing of champions. Plus a meal you really can have at Tiffany's (as long as you book a month ahead and don't mind paying \$35 for avocado toast). And for many families, breakfast is now becoming something else: their primary family meal.

As parents deal with unpredictable workdays and kids' after-school activities stretch into the evenings, gathering the clan around the table at dinner has become a more complicated operation to pull off. Yet the studies that suggest family mealtimes are great for everybody's health and sanity are not ambiguous. Rather than struggle to hold it all together, some parents are just opting to front-load their family time.

"It kind of evolved organically," says Meghan MacKinnon, of Wilmette, Ill., who has daughters in third, fifth and eighth grades. Their middle daughter is a picky eater, and much of their precious dinnertime was spent coaxing her to finish her meal. "We realized that in order to make sure she got enough calories, we had to give her a good breakfast," says MacKinnon. "It was one of the meals she didn't fight over." So they began to make the first meal of the day a little more substantial. Then their daughters started to have multiple extracurricular pursuits, which made evenings a bit of a hustle for both parents. "It clicked with me a couple of years ago, when a friend of mine whose kids play a lot of hockey said, 'We've become a breakfast family.' And I realized, Ohhhh. We are too."

The MacKinnons' meal shift was the result of changes in the way their lives were ordered that are echoed throughout the U.S., if not much of the world. Her husband decided to work from home, rather than spend time commuting to an office he didn't need. That meant he could come to breakfast, even if he didn't always eat. With the rise of the gig economy and results-oriented



^
"Breakfast is a reminder that any good family meal is not about the food anyway," says therapist Anne Fishel

work environments, more and more employees can set their own hours or work locations. But that doesn't mean they put in fewer hours—they just contend with end-of-day spillovers. Eating together before work, rather than after, can be easier to plan for.

Like a majority of college-educated mothers, MacKinnon went back into the labor force and now works as a preschool administrator and teacher, meaning neither she nor her spouse has much bandwidth to prepare meals. For many parents, that time crunch leads to an increased reliance on eating out or grabbing takeout, but the MacKinnons took a different approach: "I'm not a good cook and I really don't like cooking," she says. "But I can make breakfast."

And of course, the looming specter of college means many kids' days are full of enriching activities, from sports to sessions with a math tutor. "I would say dinner when we have all five of us is once or twice a week, whereas breakfast we can manage four or five times a week," says MacKinnon. "It's the meal we most consistently eat together."

STUDIES HAVE LONG SHOWN that eating as a family brings with it a cornucopia of benefits, ranging from decreasing a child's risk for obesity, eating disorders, drug and alcohol use, depression and teen pregnancy, to improving their academic performance, eating habits, self-esteem and resilience. Mostly, however, this research has been based on families who have dinner together, which researchers find is still the preferred option.

But Anne Fishel, a family therapist and director and co-founder of the Family Dinner Project, a nonprofit organization that endeavors to encourage families to eat together, is a breakfast believer. "It's our go-to recommendation," she says. "When families say they're too busy for dinner, we say, 'Well, what about family breakfast?'" In fact, the organization recently launched an offshoot, the Family Breakfast Project. It's a seven-day guide with recipes, conversation starters and morning efficiency tips. Fishel is not the only one who's into this idea. "Having breakfast family meals has become more common," says Jerica Berge, director of the Healthy Eating and Activity Across the Lifespan Center at the University of Minnesota. She has done several studies specifically on breakfast and has found

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African Gem Cutter Makes \$2,689,000 Mistake...Will You?

This story breaks my heart every time. Allegedly, just two years after the discovery of tanzanite in 1967, a Maasai tribesman knocked on the door of a gem cutter's office in Nairobi. The Maasai had brought along an enormous chunk of tanzanite and he was looking to sell. His asking price? Fifty dollars. But the gem cutter was suspicious and assumed that a stone so large could only be glass. The cutter told the tribesman, no thanks, and sent him on his way. Huge mistake. It turns out that the gem was genuine and would have easily dwarfed the world's largest cut tanzanite at the time. Based on common pricing, that “chunk” could have been worth close to \$3,000,000!

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that the health benefits of family meals are not dependent on the time of day.

As might be expected, there are some experts who caution that trying to substitute breakfast for dinner is simply a sign that people are overloading their schedules at the cost of time with family and denying their children the chance to process the events of the day with their parents. “The big challenge with family breakfast is that there is a defined time that the family has to leave in the morning to get to work and school,” says Blake Jones, an assistant psychology professor at Brigham Young University, who has also studied family meals. Dinner, he points out, can be more leisurely and lead to longer conversations. “With bedtimes getting later, the influence of electronic devices in the evenings and shortened sleep patterns for adults and children, it is often the case that kids and parents don’t wake up early enough to get ready for the day and still have enough time to sit down to eat a meal as a family.”

Observational studies suggest that the average family dinner lasts about 20 minutes, though if you have little kids, it probably feels much longer. Breakfasts, with everybody needing to be out the door at a given time, would logically need to be much quicker, Jones observes. But breakfast advocates point to that shared deadline as a positive thing, because parents know where everybody is—the options are usually limited to bedroom, bathroom or waiting for the bathroom. Before dinner, the family could be flung to the four winds and impossible to locate.

One of the biggest advantages for many that family breakfast has over dinner is that it’s much more difficult to complain about. “The culinary choices for breakfast tend to inspire less grumbling,” says Laura Vanderkam, a time-management expert and the author of *What the Most Successful People Do Before Breakfast*. “We do

How to get the kids to come to the table

You set the alarm, scrambled the eggs and set the table. There’s just one problem: your children refuse to sit down for breakfast. Here’s how to deal with kids who insist they’re too tired, not hungry or not interested in what you made, according to Nancy Oliveira, a senior nutritionist at Massachusetts’ Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital and mother to a 12-year-old son.

START AT NIGHT

Oliveira says many people aren’t hungry in the morning because they eat too late at night. Encourage your kids to stop eating three hours before bed, and they’ll be more likely to wake up wanting breakfast. A slightly earlier bedtime may also help.

SERVE EASY FOODS

You don’t need a full buffet. “Lighter, bite-size foods” like cereal, nuts and sliced fruit may get kids to at least pick at something, Oliveira says. Serving your children’s favorite flavors or brands may make breakfast feel more like an occasion.

SET REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS

If a daily family breakfast just isn’t happening, try for twice a week. Making those days count is better than forcing grumpy kids to sulk through a meal they don’t want. “The goal is to create this relaxing, welcoming, fun table,” Oliveira says. “It’s not even about sitting and eating for 15 minutes. It’s that they want to come to the family table.”

—Jamie Ducharme



1 BOWL & YOU'RE GOOD TILL LUNCH

With 2% milk, at least half of adults had a lower desire to eat than before breakfast for 3 1/2 hours.



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GROWL PROOF YOUR MORNING

After eating a bowl with 2% milk, at least half of adults had a lower desire to eat than before breakfast for 3 1/2 hours.



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want kids to eat their broccoli, but nobody serves it in the mornings.” Kids like the pancakes or French toast, and parents are delighted to smuggle in some fruit. Breakfasts are also easier to prepare. This obviates a problem raised by a 2014 study from North Carolina, which suggested that the benefits of the home-cooked family meal might be outweighed by the pressure providing such a meal puts on parents, usually women. Breakfast offers the option of a more equitable sharing of the load, since technically children can also be more involved in the preparation, which usually means they’re also more likely to eat.

Delicious food is one of life’s great pleasures, but—don’t read this part, Gordon Ramsay—it is not the point of the family meal. That ritual is much more about the conversation. And on this front, breakfast often wins. As all parents know, the only answer to the dinnertime question, What did you do today? that a child ever gives is, Nothing. Breakfast conversations, on the other hand, are much harder to wriggle out of. “You can ask things at breakfast that you can’t ask at dinner, like, What are you looking forward to today?” says Fishel. “Is there a part of the day that you’re worried about? Can we help you feel more confident? What’s the first thing you thought about when you woke up this morning? Did you have any dreams last night?” (Note to readers: probably best not to ask them all at once.)

Some scholarship suggests that people are often better to be around in the morning, right after they’ve gotten some rest and before the day has ground them down—and not just the so-called morning people. Human willpower gets a little top-up while we sleep; we’re a little more

sunny-side up. This is the MacKinnon family experience. “I think my kids are fresher in the morning,” Meghan MacKinnon says. “Our breakfasts are more calm and more fun because the kids aren’t tired and they’re not thinking about the homework they have to do. The grumpiness hasn’t kicked in.” They also find that as they look ahead to the day, they remember events—that it is school picture day and maybe a different T-shirt would be better, for example—that they would not have thought of the night before.

ALL OF THIS is fine in theory, except for those creatures known as teenagers. The notoriously nocturnal adolescent of our

‘The culinary choices for breakfast tend to inspire less grumbling.’

LAURA VANDERKAM, time-management expert and mother of four

species would gladly skip a gourmet breakfast in bed if it meant an extra five minutes with their eyes shut. A 2013 study of middle and high school students from Minneapolis found that on average, adolescents reported having family breakfasts 1.5 times and family dinners 4.1 times in the past week. But

other studies have found that, despite their unwillingness to get out of bed on time, and their perception that they were too busy for an early meal with their family, most teenagers said they enjoyed the family breakfast—even if they didn’t want to talk to their parents during it. In March, a University of Missouri study of more than 12,000 students across 300 schools in the U.S. found that adolescents who consistently ate breakfasts with their families had a better body image.

Dinner is not in any danger of being replaced in the family-ritual pantheon. Nor should it be. But many families are finding that breakfast is a bit like an egg-white omelet; it’s not as good as the original, heartier dish, but it’s better than nothing and probably won’t kill them. □



Should you give your children juice?

Though juice was once a cornerstone of a balanced breakfast, its place at the table has been looking a bit precarious these days. Concerns over excess sugar and calories have led many parents to stop buying it—especially after a 2017 recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which said juice provides no nutritional benefit to babies before their first birthday. Even older kids should limit their intake to minimize the risk of weight gain and tooth decay, according to the AAP.

But is a glass of OJ really a big deal? While limiting sugar and calorie consumption is important, Dr. Wanda Abreu, a pediatrician at NewYork-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital, says the issue is more about what juice often replaces. Kids are "better off just eating the fruit itself," she says.

Juice contains the same vitamins and natural sugars found in whole fruit but lacks the satiating fiber that aids healthy digestion and makes an apple or orange a satisfying snack, Abreu explains. As a result, juice is less filling and easier to overconsume than real fruit, and it delivers a hefty dose of sugar straight to the bloodstream—all of which can lead to weight gain. Plus,

if young kids drink juice all day from a bottle or sippy cup, it coats their teeth in cavity-causing sugars, the AAP says.

If buying fresh fruit is too costly or inconvenient, Dr. Matt Haemer, a pediatric nutrition specialist at Children's Hospital Colorado, recommends offering frozen or unsweetened canned versions over juice. "It's about establishing a behavioral pattern long-term ... and attempting to improve what we have currently: an epidemic of children growing up in our country for whom it's not normal to eat fruits and vegetables," he says.

Still, Abreu says parents shouldn't feel guilty if their kids drink the occasional glass of juice. Parents should look for 100% fruit juices, not "fruit drinks" or juice cocktails, which typically contain added sugars on top of those found naturally in fruits. And the AAP offers recommendations by age: no juice at all for babies; no more than 4 oz. per day for toddlers; up to 6 oz. per day for kids ages 4 to 6; and up to 8 oz. per day for older kids.

"Are there better options? Yes," Abreu says. "But we don't live in a perfect world, so you kind of just do the best you can."

—Jamie Ducharme

THE GROWL STOPPER



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TRUST

Microsoft's Brad Smith
is trying to restore
public faith in Big Tech

By Romesh Ratnesar/
Redmond, Wash.

INSIDE A SUNNY CONFERENCE ROOM ON THE Microsoft campus in Redmond, Wash., a small team of employees is describing how technology can save the world. From technology. Microsoft's Digital Diplomacy unit consists of two dozen policy experts who work on everything from the ethical use of artificial intelligence to protecting the 2020 presidential election from foreign cyberinterference. Brad Smith, Microsoft's president, sits in the middle of the table, sipping coffee from a mug bearing the name of his hometown, Appleton, Wis.

The group updates Smith on a tech-industry initiative co-founded by Microsoft to combat terrorist messaging on the Internet. Smith pushes for more ideas. "We need something that will create a new mold," he says. A few minutes later, he gets a demo of Election-Guard, a new encrypted voting system developed by Microsoft's engineers. "How close are we to getting a state to pilot this?" When he's told the technology may be tested in local elections early next year, Smith pounds his fist and leaps out of his chair in excitement.

>
*Smith has assumed
the role of unofficial
global ambassador
for the tech industry*

PHOTOGRAPH BY
IAN ALLEN FOR TIME



US

He floats the possibility of deploying ElectionGuard in states holding presidential caucuses, many of which already use a Microsoft program to record and track results. “We’ve got to start early and move fast,” he says.

Smith’s sense of urgency comes from experience. At 60, he is Microsoft’s longest-serving executive, the institutional bridge between the company’s current leadership and its legendary co-founder Bill Gates. His tenure as the company’s top legal officer spans the software giant’s bruising antitrust battles with the U.S. government two decades ago and its resurgence as a cloud-computing force, which this year helped Microsoft vault past Apple and Amazon as the most valuable company in the world. “He’s someone who’s

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been through a lot of different ups and downs as we've evolved, the tech industry has evolved, and the world around us has evolved," says Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, who promoted Smith to his current role in 2015.

It says something about the nature of those changes that Smith, since becoming Microsoft's president, has focused as much on external relations as on internal strategy. With public distrust at its peak over the size, power and business practices of the tech industry's biggest companies, Smith has assumed the role of unofficial global ambassador for the industry. In the past year, he has spent more than 100 days on the road, visiting 22 countries and pushing for collaboration between governments and tech companies to limit the destabilizing effects of digital technologies.

Those efforts have produced some high-profile results. In November, French President Emmanuel Macron unveiled an international accord—championed by Smith and signed by 67 countries and 358 private companies and entities—to promote “trust and security in cyberspace” and to protect elections from cyberattacks. After the March terrorist assault on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, that killed 51 people and was livestreamed on Facebook, Smith helped New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern launch the Christchurch Call, an initiative to eliminate violent-extremist content online. As part of the agreement, Smith worked to persuade social-media companies like Facebook and

Twitter to pledge to remove extremist content as soon as it's posted and to report publicly on their progress in doing so. “Brad was one of the driving forces behind that effort—he spent real time, energy and capital to bring it about,” says Senator Mark Warner, a Virginia Democrat.

Smith's influence is well known among tech-industry titans and policymakers in Washington, but he has wielded much of it behind the scenes. He will step more squarely onto the public stage with the Sept. 10 release of his first book, *Tools and Weapons: The Promise and the Peril of the Digital Age*. Filled with accounts of closed-door meetings, from Microsoft's boardroom to the West Wing to the Vatican, the book shows tech leaders trying to respond to a seemingly endless series of crises: Edward Snowden's revelations of government surveillance of private data servers; Russia's hacking and social-media disinformation campaign during the 2016 presidential election; the 2017 North Korea-sponsored cyberattack known as WannaCry, which crippled hundreds of thousands of computer systems worldwide; the livestreaming of the Christchurch rampage.

The picture that emerges is of an industry ill-equipped to control the technologies it unleashed. Smith argues that the tech sector needs to reform itself or risk having change forced upon it. “Is our biggest problem today that the world is doing too much to manage technology, or too little?” he says. “I would argue too little—and that, in fact, governments are moving too slowly,

not that they're moving too fast.” In his book, and in his increasingly high-profile public advocacy, Smith appears as both an advocate for tech responsibility and a voice of moderation in the clamorous debate over regulating Big Tech. “Brad elevates the conversation,” says Chris Liddell, a senior official in the Trump White House and former Microsoft executive. “He's representing Microsoft, but also sincerely trying to do the right thing for the tech industry and for the country.”

Yet for a skeptical public, two questions immediately arise. The first is whether Smith's prescriptions go far enough toward curbing the industry's power or remedying the damage it's done to consumer privacy, social stability and democracy itself. Smith calls for “limited initial regulatory” steps on digital-technology companies, while insisting that “it is more than possible for companies to succeed while doing more to address their societal responsibilities.” Critics say that's just letting the fox guard the henhouse. “It's a simple fact that technology has been weaponized by private companies against democracy,” says Barry C. Lynn, executive director of the Open Markets Institute, a Washington think tank that supports antitrust action against tech behemoths. “Corporations are not people. They don't have souls. They're institutions designed to make money. And the way the government has always dealt with them is to regulate them to the point where they cease being dangerous to the public.”

The second question is whether Smith's efforts do more to advance Microsoft's interests than the public's. Though Facebook, Google and Amazon have some policy goals in common with Microsoft, heavier government oversight of the Internet isn't one of them. Some see Smith's support for regulation not as an act of socially minded corporate citizenship but as a strategy to slow the growth of Microsoft's rivals. “By taking these high-profile positions, Microsoft is able to highlight its own thought leadership and commitment to individual consumers, while throwing the competition under the bus,” says Dipayan Ghosh, co-director of the Digital Platforms and Democracy project at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and a former Facebook employee.

Smith doesn't dispute that claiming the high ground has helped Microsoft's bottom line. But he believes that Silicon Valley's new giants should learn from Redmond, not fear it. “I think that Microsoft offers both a cautionary and a hopeful tale. If you don't figure out how to make things work from a broader societal perspective, you will pay a steep price for many years,” he says. “But then there's the hopeful tale. We survived, and we're doing well. And one of the reasons is that we turned our

“ If you don't figure out how to make things work from a broad societal perspective, you will pay a steep price for many years. ”



weaknesses from the 1990s into strengths.” Speaking as much of his own journey as his company’s, he adds, “What I’ve learned here is that if you believe in the long term, your day eventually arrives.”

EARLIER THIS SUMMER, I visited Smith on the fifth floor of Building 34 on Microsoft’s 502-acre campus. While other company executives enjoy panoramic views of the Cascade Range and surrounding forests, Smith’s corner office, which he’s occupied since 2002, overlooks a parking lot. It’s decorated with globes of various sizes; photos of his wife Kathy and their two grown children; and a framed copy of the CLOUD Act, a bipartisan law signed by Trump in 2018 that limits how law-enforcement agencies can access consumer data held by tech companies in third countries. The bookshelves hold technological artifacts featured by Smith and his co-author Carol Ann Browne in their book, including a replica of a century-old phone used by Alexander Graham Bell.

Smith meets me a little before 9 in the morning, wearing charcoal slacks and a plaid shirt. Modestly built, with fading red hair, blue eyes and a gravelly Midwestern accent, Smith has an amiable, self-effacing demeanor that belies his nine-figure wealth and intense work ethic. Close aides

Smith, fourth from bottom right, at a Tech for Good summit with world leaders and top business executives, hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron at the Élysée Palace on May 15

are known to keep their phones charged near their beds, in case Smith emails them from another time zone. His commute takes 11 to 13 minutes, depending on the one traffic light on his route, which gets him to his desk by 7 a.m. (At the end of his 12-hour days, he relaxes by playing video games.) To write *Tools and Weapons*, Smith holed up before dawn in a windowless meeting room, running through Browne’s edits while his colleagues trickled onto campus. The pair finished the 90,000-word manuscript in less than six months.

Smith’s father worked for the Wisconsin Bell phone company, and he spent his childhood moving among several cities in the state.

He attended elementary school in Racine, a declining industrial city where he was one of the only white students in a predominantly African-American school. During summers, he earned money by picking onions with migrant farmers.

At his mother’s urging, Smith left Wisconsin to attend Princeton, where he was part of a peer group that included Elena Kagan, Eliot Spitzer and Kathy Surace, Smith’s future wife. “He was a little dorky, that was my first impression,” she says. “It was a competitive environment, and some people were more competitive than others. Brad tended to deflect that and take an interest in other people and learn about them, as opposed to talking about himself.”

Technology

Smith became intrigued with personal computers and bought his first IBM PC in the mid-1980s, in his third year of law school. After graduating, he interviewed at Covington & Burling, a Washington law firm, on the condition that the job come with a computer. He got both. “They said no one had asked for one before,” Smith recalls. As the firm’s resident technologist, he worked on copyright issues for the nascent software industry’s trade association, which gained the notice of lawyers at Microsoft. He joined the company in 1993 as head of its European legal and corporate affairs team, based in Paris, with a mandate to fight software piracy.

DURING HIS FIRST MEETING in Seattle with Gates, Smith presented the CEO with a one-page memo on a proposed European Community copyright directive. After marking up the sheet with a pencil, Gates grabbed a blue marker and began brainstorming ideas on a whiteboard, using his hand as an eraser. “It was covered in blue ink by the end of the meeting,” Smith recalls, over a lunch of grilled salmon at a restaurant on campus. “You could see the wheels turning.”

Gates’ taste for legal combat led Microsoft into a series of confrontations with competitors and with the U.S. Department of Justice, culminating in a four-year antitrust trial over the company’s attempts to limit the use of non-Microsoft web browsers on its dominant Windows platform. Though it reached a tentative settlement with the federal government in 2001, Microsoft remained embroiled in numerous suits with states, foreign governments and other tech companies.

When Smith returned to the U.S. in 2002 to become general counsel, he pleaded with Gates and Steve Ballmer, who was then running the company, to “make peace” with their adversaries. “Until there was peace brought to the industry, we wouldn’t see the regulatory pressures subside,” Smith says. “And

making peace also required we change the way we worked internally and develop a capability to work with governments.”

It was a crucial business decision, Smith says. Had Microsoft continued its assaults on regulators and the competition, “we wouldn’t be the most valuable company in the world today. We wouldn’t have been given the opportunity. We had to persuade people that we deserved their trust.” In the foreword to *Tools and Weapons*, Gates credits Smith with driving “a big cultural and strategic shift” at Microsoft that saw the company “put more time and energy into connecting with ... the government, our partners and sometimes even our competitors.”

That has given Smith credibility with the newer moguls of tech, even if he’s delivering a message they don’t like. Late last year, Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg reached out to Smith,

As Microsoft’s longest-serving executive, Smith (pictured outside the Supreme Court in February 2018) has steered the company out of legal troubles

at Gates’ suggestion, for advice on how the social network should handle scrutiny from lawmakers, the media and the general public. Smith says he consults “from time to time” with Zuckerberg and Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg. “Some problems are deeper and broader today than they would be if we’d started to move toward some smarter regulation a decade ago,” Smith says. Among other things, he favors laws to limit how artificial intelligence and facial-recognition software are developed and used by both private companies and government agencies.

At the same time, he pushes back against calls for government to impose stiffer penalties against the biggest tech companies, or even break them up. That is disappointing but not surprising, says Danny O’Brien, director of strategy at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which advocates for online privacy rights. “When it comes to big solutions,” O’Brien says, Smith “is not going to





suggest what a lot of outsiders now think needs to happen.”

EVERY FRIDAY MORNING, Microsoft’s 10-person senior leadership team gathers in CEO Nadella’s conference room to make decisions on business strategy. Increasingly, the discussion focuses on trust. “Our business model depends on one thing and one thing alone, which is the world having more trust in technology,” Nadella says.

Smith’s mandate is to make that happen. He touts the company’s push to expand broadband coverage to 3 million rural Americans by

2022 and its recent \$500 million investment in creating more affordable housing in the Seattle area. Rather than commercializing the ElectionGuard technology—which enables voters, election officials and the media to independently verify that their votes were counted and not altered—Microsoft will make it available for free on GitHub, an open-source software platform.

These Smith-led initiatives also advance Microsoft’s business interests, of course. Company executives don’t deny that they burnish Microsoft’s image, but they also say Smith’s commitment to good corporate citizenship is real. “It would be easy to say, ‘Hey, this a challenge. Gosh, it’d be nice to help,’ and then sit there,” says Amy Hood, Microsoft’s chief financial officer. “That’s not who he is.”

In early 2017, Smith came up with the concept of a “digital Geneva convention” that would establish globally recognized protections for civilians against cyberattacks, modeled on the 1949 Geneva convention that prohibits the deliberate targeting of civilians in conventional warfare. A year later, Smith had persuaded 34 companies to sign an accord based on those principles, and 60 more have joined since, including Google and Facebook but not Apple or Amazon. He followed that up with the Christchurch Call, which he launched after meeting with Ardern 12 days after the Christchurch attacks. “She told me, ‘I’m not interested in just having some PR moment. I want to do something that’s real.’ So we started to talk,” Smith says. He proposed a pledge signed by governments and tech companies to take immediate steps to rid social-media platforms of violent-extremist content. Smith says these efforts represent a new kind of “multistakeholder diplomacy.”

So far, there’s not a lot to show for it. The volume of toxic or violent content on social-media platforms continues to grow, despite hundreds of millions of government dollars spent trying to curb it. Cyberthreats against democratic elections, privacy and well-regulated markets are also on the rise. To critics, the tech industry’s push to work with government on those problems looks more like co-opting the feds than collaborating with them. And the Trump Administration has been cool to such collaboration anyway. When I ask whether he’s

discouraged by the Administration’s refusal to embrace his causes, Smith shrugs. Citing the French-led cybersecurity accord, he says, “We’ve got 67 governments on board without the backing of the U.S. Imagine what might happen if the U.S. decided it wanted to be a leader in the world of multilateral diplomacy?”

As we finish lunch and head back to Smith’s office, I ask whether the world’s democracies are up to the challenge of protecting the world from technology’s perils. His typically cheery countenance creases and turns somber. “I worry that 2019 has some similarities to the early 1930s,” he says. “There are days in which one can be pessimistic about the future. And on the darkest days, one can even say that ultimately things get better, but sometimes they get really, really bad before they improve.”

It raises the inevitable question of whether Smith’s digital diplomacy might lead to a different kind of public service. “If you had laid odds in college on whether Brad would end up high up in the federal government, or the president of Microsoft, most of us would have bet on the former,” says Anne-Marie Slaughter, president and CEO of New America, who attended Princeton with Smith. (Microsoft has provided funding to the think tank.) When I mention the possibility to Smith, he doesn’t rule it out. “Look, I’m 60 years old. Who knows what I’ll be doing 10 years from now?”

There’s a good argument that Smith’s current perch gives him more power to steer the technology industry in a socially responsible direction than he would ever have in Washington. How to balance the opportunities created by digital technologies with their potential dangers is fast becoming one of the central moral and political dilemmas of this age. Getting politicians, tech companies and the public to agree on technology’s place in society is a monumental task that won’t be completed anytime soon. Smith’s achievement has been to get it started. □

“ I worry that 2019 has some similarities to the early 1930s. There are days in which one can be pessimistic about the future. ”



Nation

The Battle To Draw the Battle Lines

State races starting this fall will shape Congress for the next decade
By Philip Elliott

JESSICA POST IS STUCK IN TRAFFIC 63 MILES SOUTH of Washington, D.C., when she pulls an iPhone to her ear. “How’s everything going with your family?” she asks a contender for Virginia’s state legislature this fall. “We are all in for your run. I was reading about your opponent the other day. He sounds like a real piece of ...” Here, she remembers that TIME is tagging along. “Work,” she finishes.

Calls like this consume a lot of Post’s time these days. The 39-year-old president of the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee (DLCC) is leading an unheralded but critically important campaign to win back state offices for the party after eight years of deep losses during Barack Obama’s presidency. The consequences go far beyond which states may be prevented from joining lawsuits trying to dismantle Obamacare or restrict abortion rights. The candidates who win state legislative races later this year and in 2020 will decide who wields power in Washington for a decade.

Every 10 years, politics rewrites itself, starting with the decennial Census. Legislatures in 31 states use the findings to draw the borders of federal congressional districts. In some, nonpartisan commissions draw the lines clinically. In others, it comes down to who has the Sharpie and the least amount of shame. The map is due to be reset before the 2022

midterm elections, which means lawmakers elected as soon as this year may determine where the congressional battlegrounds will be into the 2030s. “State legislatures are the building blocks of our democracy,” Post tells TIME during a break from candidate calls in the DLCC office five blocks from the White House. “It’s a level of the ballot that’s been forgotten. But state legislators draw the lines, so control of Congress in many ways is decided by rules put together in state legislatures.”

For decades, Democrats have largely overlooked these local offices to their detriment. Terry McAuliffe, a former Virginia governor, remembers arriving at Democratic National Committee (DNC) headquarters to start his job as party chairman in February 2001 and making a troubling discovery: lawmakers in the states were starting to draw new district maps, and no one at the DNC was paying attention.

“Not a thing had been done on redistricting,” McAuliffe recalls. “In the past, I don’t think our party understood the importance of legislative chambers.”

They soon learned. In 2010, the Tea Party wave washed 681 Democrats out of legislative seats right before new battle lines could be drawn, according to data tracked by the National Conference of State Legislatures, giving the GOP the opportunity to cement its advantage in competitive congressional

districts. In all, Democrats lost 958 state legislative seats during Obama's presidency.

Post, a meticulous Missouri native who previously held top roles at Emily's List and the DLCC, rejoined the group in 2016 with a mandate to reverse the slide. Since then, Democrats have flipped 283 state legislature seats, with a net gain of six chambers. Post has tripled the organization's staff and quintupled its fundraising target from \$10 million to an estimated \$50 million for the 2020 cycle.

Other Democratic groups have begun investing in down-ballot contests too. In August, Emily's List announced a \$20 million effort to help flip legislatures. Former Attorney General Eric Holder, with the backing of Obama and the help of McAuliffe, has started a group called the National Democratic Redistricting Committee, which is dedicated to the process of drawing new borders. Flip-pable, a grassroots Democratic group focused on winning statehouse races, has already funneled \$125,000 into Virginia and is eyeing eight other states in 2020.

But Democrats are aware they're still playing catch-up in a space the party has long neglected. "Republicans have been doing this for decades," says Amanda Litman, the executive director of Run for Something, a group that recruits young progressives to stand in down-ballot elections. "If we don't have Democratic control of state legislatures ahead of redistricting in 2021, Republicans will take back Congress in 2022, and that's the end of functioning government in Washington."

ON A RECENT Saturday afternoon, Post huddled with Virginia's Democratic brain trust on the 20th floor of an office building in downtown Richmond, Va. The group gathered around a conference table, clicking through a slideshow of district maps, media budgets and historical vote tallies. Post spends a lot of time on the state these days. Virginia, New Jersey, Mississippi and Louisiana hold the only statewide legislative elections in 2019, and Post is using the commonwealth to test her assumptions, technology, vendors and data, shelling out \$1 million and counting in the process. The conference room looks down on the capitol, where the DLCC needs to flip two seats for Democrats to claim the majority in the state's house of delegates

BY THE NUMBERS

958

Number of state legislature seats **Democrats lost** during the Obama presidency

283

Number of State legislature seats **Democrats have gained** since 2016

61

Number of state legislative chambers **controlled by Republicans**

31

Number of states in which **legislators draw the district borders** for U.S. House seats

\$50 million

DLCC fundraising goal for the 2020 election cycle

and two more to do the same in the senate. Doing both would give the party the trifecta—control of both legislative chambers and the governor's mansion.

Post asks for a briefing on what house strategists have gleaned from the first six focus groups they've organized in Virginia. She wants to know how many Republican-held districts they're targeting where Democrat Ralph Northam won his race for governor in 2017, and how many Tim Kaine won when he ran for U.S. Senate in 2018. (The answer is nine and 12.) How many districts, she asks, are Democrats leaving uncontested?

The answer is not many. Democrats have built a machine in Virginia, seeded in part with cash Post started sending southward as early as December 2018. There are 91 Democratic candidates for the commonwealth's 100 house races on Nov. 5, and 35 senate hopefuls for the chamber's 40 spots, which include three senate districts that voted for Hillary Clinton for President in 2016 but are currently rep-

resented by Republicans. "They are running to build the party," house caucus executive director Trevor Southerland says.

The DLCC's play has indirect effects too. For instance, the group has featured one of its favorite candidates, activist Sheila Bynum-Coleman, in national fundraising messages; 21% of her donations have come from out-of-state donors as a result. "I don't think I would have gotten the attention if it weren't for the DLCC," says Bynum-Coleman, who is challenging the current speaker of the house of delegates in a Richmond-area district.

At the conference table, Post keeps asking questions about the blend of TV and digital advertising in specific races. "That's an expensive district," says Kristina Hagen, executive director of the Virginia Senate Democratic Caucus, of one seat in the Washington media market. "There is a world in which we can get away with digital and cable."

Post still urges them to book TV early. "Reserve aggressively," she says. "We have to win this."

The Democrats can afford pricey TV ads because they've been chipping away at the GOP's longtime financial advantage in the states. The three major Democratic committees in Virginia have already spent \$2 million, compared with just a quarter of that invested by their GOP counterparts. (Virginia's GOP house speaker Kirk Cox, Bynum-Coleman's opponent, has added about \$500,000 through his PAC to help his Republican colleagues.) "I'd think Democrats should be disappointed if they don't flip both chambers," says Kyle Kondik, an analyst at the University of Virginia's Center for Politics. "At the same time, I don't think it's a slam dunk that they will in fact flip them both."

It's easy to see how Post convinces donors that these low-profile races are worthy investments in the Trump era. Republicans "won and rigged the maps," Post says. "They re-engineered everything and put in place durable majorities." Now she wants Democrats to have control when it comes time to define the next 10 years.

Post's counterpart at the Republican State Leadership Committee (RSLC), Austin Chambers, is working hard to prevent that. Chambers says his group will raise more money than ever, and plans to top the \$40 million it spent in the 2015–2016 election cycle. In August,



Post, center, with DLCC press secretary Matt Harringer, right, and Erik Darcey, campaign manager for Virginia house of delegates candidate Dan Helmer

the RSLC announced that former Republican National Committee finance chairman Ron Weiser, a fundraising legend, was joining the group. “They should be optimistic. Because when you’re at rock bottom, the only place you have to go is up,” Chambers says of the Democrats. “We’re glad they finally discovered this thing called state legislators.”

But Chambers has been warning donors that Post’s efforts cannot be written off, lest Republicans suffer the way their opponents have at the state level. “What happens in a few state legislative races over the next year and a half will determine the balance of Congress for at least the next decade or longer,” Chambers says. “The importance of this cannot be overstated. It’s as serious as anything we’ve ever faced.”

THE PATH toward Republican dominance at the state level began more than three decades ago, when Democrats, in the wake of Jimmy Carter’s loss to Ronald Reagan in 1980, focused their energy on presidential politics in the 1984 cycle. The current dynamic dates back to 2010, when Karl Rove wrote a *Wall Street Journal* column laying the groundwork for what came to be called the Redistricting Majority Project (REDMAP). The RSLC’s REDMAP program recruited and funded state-level candidates aggressively. REDMAP spent \$30 million to the DLCC’s \$8 million that

year. The effort netted GOP total control of 11 legislatures and a trifecta in nine additional states. In turn, the party started drawing congressional districts it liked.

Republicans still start with a leg up in the battle for the states in 2020. The GOP controls 52% of seats in all state legislatures, with majorities in 62% of state legislative chambers and total control of state government in 22 states, to Democrats’ 14. But many of the chambers have narrow GOP edges. Democrats stand to pick up majorities in seven chambers—including those in Minnesota, Arizona and Virginia—if they can win 19 specific races.

Meanwhile, the gains Democrats have made in recent years may be difficult to defend. President Donald Trump was a liability for Republicans in 2018, when he wasn’t on the ballot and his approval sat at 40% in Gallup’s final pre-election survey. But Trump could wind up helping GOP candidates in 2020, when the party hopes his massive political machine will boost fortunes of candidates all the way down the ballot.

It’s also possible that existing Democratic-led statehouses overstep their mandates and provoke a backlash. In typically blue Illinois, for example, lawmakers

declared abortion a fundamental right, no matter what the Supreme Court may say. When Republicans in the Colorado statehouse objected to the pace of change under Democratic control, they raised procedural hurdles and demanded the measures be read aloud. Democrats responded by having five computers read a 2,023-page bill simultaneously—so quickly the text was unintelligible. The issue went to court, where the Republicans won.

The party that wins control of Richmond in November and other state capitals in 2020 has decisions to make. Republicans may want to cluster African-American voters into one district to make the rest of the area easier to win. Democrats may want to spread those voters out more evenly. In Northern Virginia, both parties may want to minimize the number of seats that have to buy ad time in the expensive D.C. market. Armed with enough data, it’s possible to draw lines that enhance the odds of winning again and again. “We were so pleased as Democrats that we won this Congress,” Post says of the 2018 elections. “But the truth is, it’s just a rental.”

All this is on Post’s mind as the car inches through the traffic toward the Washington suburbs. She’s back on the phone, checking in with a different Virginia candidate. “Thank you for putting your name on the ballot,” she says. “It’s the bravest thing you can do.” □



*The Palace of
Westminster has been
the site of British
democracy since 1016*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BEN QUINTON FOR TIME



World

VENERABLE AND VULNERABLE

Britain's Houses of Parliament are falling down.
Can they be saved in time? **By Billy Perrigo**

ANDY PIPER WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE Houses of Parliament. Not what goes on inside them, but the buildings themselves—the ornate debating chambers and wood-paneled rooms where the U.K.'s legislative body goes about its business. Chosen as design director for Parliament's restoration program, Piper had the job of alerting lawmakers to the state of the houses of state. So in summer 2017, he took the then leader of the House of Commons, Conservative lawmaker Andrea Leadsom, on a tour of the building's darkest corners.

Piper hoped to show Leadsom a few fire hazards and maybe an unsafe cable or two. As the Cabinet member responsible for organizing government business, she could draw more attention to the issue. But when he unlocked the door to the parliamentary basement, the stench hit them both. Raw sewage was oozing down the corridor. "We couldn't walk all the way through the basement," Leadsom, now Business Secretary, recalls. "We had to go back and enter from the other end." Far from being

embarrassed by the incident, Piper was overjoyed. "It was very convenient for us," he says. "She probably thought we had set it up."

The Palace of Westminster, as the estate is formally known, is in disrepair. Its facade looks sturdy from a distance, but up close it's held together only by the grime of decades. In the basement, Victorian-era pipes carry pressurized steam just inches from high-voltage cables. Asbestos lines the walls. Staff members upstairs count getting trapped in elevators as an occupational hazard. Most of the nearly 4,000 bronze-framed windows don't close properly, letting warm air out and cold rain in. The alarm system is so unreliable that at least two wardens patrol the building looking for fires, day and night, all year round. Even the gilded chambers where lawmakers sit aren't immune to decay. In April, a debate in the House of Commons was cut short by water leaking from the ceiling. That day, the upkeep team was lucky. On bad days, the leaks come instead from the 130-year-old sewage system.

World

Lawmakers have known about the growing risk since the 1940s but have taken until now to act. In 2016, an official report warned of a “substantial and growing risk [of a] single, catastrophic event.” But lawmakers didn’t vote to vacate the building until 2018. Even then, they dragged their feet, with Brexit eating up parliamentary time.

It took a fire nearly destroying the 850-year-old Notre Dame cathedral in Paris in April to instill a sense of urgency. For Parisians, that blaze was so devastating because of Notre Dame’s central role in French literature, history and religion. In the British capital there is no equivalent place of worship; the Houses of Parliament are the closest any building comes to encasing in stone the history and identity of the nation. On May 9, three weeks after the last embers in Paris were extinguished, U.K. lawmakers voted to begin setting up an independent body to totally evacuate and refurbish Parliament.

Now, as the Brexit crisis ramps up, the building is at a breaking point. On Aug. 28, Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced plans to effectively lock lawmakers out of Parliament to potentially force a “no deal” Brexit on Oct. 31, despite complaints that such a move would be unconstitutional. And on Sept. 3, Johnson said he would try to call an early election after lawmakers moved to thwart his plans. Amid the chaos, the bill to restore Parliament is under threat. “If we have a general election and it doesn’t get through before, that would be a problem,” says Mark Tami, a lawmaker who sits on the restoration board. “We would have to start all over again.”

OCCUPYING MORE THAN a million square feet on the north bank of the River Thames, the Palace of Westminster has been the seat of the British government since 1016, though the majority of today’s palace dates from the Victorian era. It has more than 1,100 rooms, including both chambers of Parliament, lawmakers’ offices, libraries and pubs. It is the home of archives and art chronicling the last millennium of British history. In one form or another, it has survived political crises, terrorist attacks and two major fires. But take a trip through its humid basement, and its decrepit state is obvious.

In a hard hat and a high-visibility vest,

Piper leads the way through the subterranean maze. Beside him, a large chunk of plaster has crumbled off the wall, revealing dusty brickwork. Piper knows the intimacies of the building better than anyone, and remembers the shock of Notre Dame catching fire in April. “That could have so easily been this building,” he says. “The amount of loss that could happen in the space of a few minutes...” He trails off.

Occasionally, fire does break out. A couple of years ago, Piper was walking down a deserted passage when he smelled burning: an old electrical system had overheated behind a panel. He raised the alarm, narrowly averting a disaster. Another time, in 2016, a malfunctioning light set fire to a section of the roof. Contractors working on scaffolding nearby spotted it with moments to spare. “That was a real close call for us,” Piper says.

The home of British democracy has burned before, if you go back far enough. On the evening of Oct. 16, 1834, a catastrophic fire struck the old Parliament building, which dated back to the 11th century. Almost all of the complex was destroyed. “People think of these huge buildings as integral to their psychological landscape,” says Caroline Shenton, author of *The Day Parliament Burned Down*, a history of the 1834 blaze. “To see them become so vulnerable so quickly is intensely shocking.”

The Palace of Westminster was soon rebuilt, bigger and grander than before. But the seeds of today’s problems were sown during construction, when David Boswell Reid, a 19th century pioneer of air-conditioning, was brought in to alter the designs. He added dozens of empty shafts, stretching from the basement to the roof, and spanning each ceiling and the floor above it. But the primitive air-conditioning system never really functioned properly. Later, workers used these invisible spaces to conceal new pipes and wires; over the years, records of exactly what each did were lost. New utilities were laid over defunct ones, and they were sprayed with carcinogenic asbestos during the 1950s when it was in vogue as a fire suppressant.

If left unchecked, it’s through these spaces that experts now fear a fire could spread rapidly. It’s not much of a stretch: in June 2018, the Glasgow School of Art in Scotland, which had been designed with



similar ventilation shafts, burned down in a matter of minutes. (Nobody was killed.) Much of the task of renovating Parliament, officials say, will be stripping and compartmentalizing these voids.

Ironically, for the duration of the work, the danger of fire will only be heightened. It’s not hard to imagine a spark from temporary electrical work setting the building alight. Both the Glasgow and Notre Dame fires began during restoration. (Investigations into the causes of both fires are ongoing.) “We are very conscious that the risk of fire will, for some period, increase,” Piper says. To mitigate that risk, a fire-safety team will have to approve all restoration work. But it won’t be easy to avoid a mistake. “Taking shortcuts is part of human nature,” says Liz Peace, the chair of the restoration board.

Brits don’t need to imagine the devastation. In June 2017, fire engulfed Grenfell Tower, a 24-story public housing



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Scaffolding covers much of the palace's blackened walls, partly to protect people from falling stone

block in west London. Holes cut through walls to accommodate gas pipes allowed smoke and fire to spread from apartment to apartment. Residents trapped at the top livestreamed their final moments as people on the ground watched helplessly. Seventy-two people died.

Grenfell was partly the result of authorities neglecting the housing of poor, mostly ethnic-minority residents. But it was also a failure of design, and Tami is worried that Parliament could suffer a similar tragedy. "There are people who work at the very top of the main chamber," He sighs. "For some of them, there's not an easy route out."

THE RISKS FACING PARLIAMENT, where some 8,000 people work each day, aren't

limited to fire. Last year, a large chunk of stone fell from Victoria Tower, the tallest part of the palace, right onto the entrance to the House of Lords. "If that had landed on somebody, it would have killed them instantly," Piper says.

After that, workers went around with buckets, prodding at suspect stonework and removing loose masonry. "When they started cleaning the structure, a lot of it just fell away because the dirt and grime was actually holding everything together," says Tami. Now, much of the building is covered in netting. "I've been here six years," Piper says, "but in the last 18 months I've felt the difference. The extreme potential for the building to kill people is becoming more obvious."

Another problem is the arcane plumbing. On one occasion in 2016, the unfortunate occupants of one room all had to get hepatitis shots after a pipe exploded, bringing the ceiling down in a rain of excrement.

Traveling deeper into the basement down a dank flight of stairs, we can smell the sewage room before we see it. Here are the ejectors—giant cauldrons into which the palace's toilets drain, where the waste of British lawmakers from William Gladstone to Theresa May has sat waiting to be expelled into the London sewage system. "The basement is more likely to flood from rain than anything else," Piper says in an attempt at reassurance. But he has discovered the room "pretty deep" in sewage more than once. These ejectors will be stripped out in the refurbishment along with the rest of the basement, he says, slapping one of the rough iron spheres, which responds with a hollow thrum. "There's 130 years of history in these," he adds with a smile. "It tells some sort of story. I'm just not sure what."

Despite the risks, some lawmakers have long resisted efforts to evacuate. "There was this idea that if we leave here, we're never coming back," Tami says. "I think that was particularly true for the members of the House of Lords," he says of the upper chamber of Parliament, where the average age is 70.

Even with plans now actually in place to vacate the palace, progress is still slow. On the current timeline, lawmakers and their staff won't move out until 2025 at the earliest, when the alternative chambers and offices across the road are finally finished. The total cost of the restoration is expected to be around \$5 billion. "It is quite a challenging deadline," says Peace, the chair of the restoration board. When lawmakers do eventually go, she says, the work is expected to take an additional six to eight years, meaning the palace stands to be out of action until well into the 2030s. Nobody knows how Britain will look at that point. "Right now is not the ideal time," Tami says of the need to evacuate Parliament amid Brexit, the biggest challenge Britain has faced in generations.

There's also a chance that the new Prime Minister could undo the plans to refurbish the building, consigning lawmakers to remain in the Palace of Westminster as it falls apart around them. Shenton is pessimistic. "Politicians' attitudes today are as they were in the early 19th century," she says, casting her gaze back to the years before the 1834 blaze. "I don't believe that history repeats itself. But human nature does." □

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THE BEST OF FALL

Margaret Atwood returns to Gilead

Ryan Murphy fashions the future of streaming

Michael B. Jordan builds a better Hollywood

Photographs by Mickalene Thomas for TIME



FIRSTS

MARGARET ATWOOD

SAW IT ALL COMING


The legendary author returns to the dystopian world she created in *The Handmaid's Tale*

BY LUCY FELDMAN


MARGARET ATWOOD WANTS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT *The Bachelorette*. We're chatting in her publisher's office in Toronto when I mention the dating show where 30-some men vie for the affection of a single woman, all on camera. She has questions: "Why are they even participating in this?" "What if they're rejected?" "I'm wondering if she's just pretending to go along with it?"

There is an irony here, observing Atwood equate the show to Sartre's adage "Hell is other people" come to life. She is, after all, known for a book that describes one of the most brutal mating rituals in the

canon. In her landmark 1985 novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, a totalitarian theocracy has taken over the U.S. in the midst of a fertility crisis. Offred, one of few women who can still bear children, is forced to participate in reproductive-slavery ceremonies in the Republic of Gilead. Offred's story ends with a notoriously ambiguous cliff-hanger: she steps into a van that will take her either to fresh hell or to freedom. For 34 years, Atwood, now 79, has deflected readers' questions about her protagonist's fate. But on Sept. 10, she will publish *The Testaments*, a new book that promises to resolve that mystery and many more.


**‘I DIDN’T
 WANT
 PEOPLE
 SAYING,
 LIKE SOME
 HAVE SAID,
 “HOW
 DID YOU
 MAKE UP
 ALL THIS
 TWISTED
 STUFF?”’**




*Atwood at work on
 The Handmaid's Tale
 in West Berlin in 1984*

The Testaments arrives at the peak of Atwood's prominence. In 2017, her 32-year-old novel soared back to the best-seller list when it became one of a handful of classic dystopias that seemed to portend troubling themes of the current era and evoke prescient anxieties about women's rights. Three months after Donald Trump's Inauguration, Hulu premiered an adaptation with Atwood's involvement that has won 11 Emmys. Women's-rights demonstrators around the globe—at pro-choice rallies in South America and Europe, at Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation hearing in the U.S.—have donned the handmaid uniform of crimson cloaks and white bonnets to make their case. Atwood's voice has become a rallying cry against climate change and threats to equality—last year she headlined a summit on the intersection of those issues, named after a reference to *The Handmaid's Tale*. Protest signs at the 2017 Women's March bore the slogan MAKE MARGARET ATWOOD FICTION AGAIN, her name now synonymous with resistance.

Atwood long rejected calls for a sequel because, she says, she knew she couldn't re-create Offred's voice. But as she saw the world change, she realized Offred wasn't the only way back into the story. She began drafting *The Testaments* partway through 2016.

The anticipation has few precedents. The U.S. publisher announced a 500,000-copy first-print

run, and the novel made the Man Booker Prize short list despite a strict embargo. Atwood will launch it with a live interview onstage in London, which will stream to 1,300 cinemas around the world. It's a

larger-than-life reception for a larger-than-life figure, one still a tad bewildered by the fanfare. She makes a point of stating the obvious: "It's just a book."

GROWING UP IN CANADA, Atwood wrote whenever she could—in the high school yearbook, in a college magazine under the pseudonym Shakesbeat Latweed. Her early jobs included a teen venture in puppeteering and later market research, and she published her first novel, *The Edible Woman*, in 1969. Since then she has published more than 60 works of fiction, nonfiction, graphic novels, poetry and children's literature. *The Handmaid's Tale* was a breakthrough, landing her on the Booker short list for the first time. In 2000 she became the first Canadian woman to win the award, for *The Blind Assassin*.

On the patio of her neighborhood café, Atwood glances over her shoulder to scan for eavesdroppers. "Things never used to be like this," she says, peeking out from under a sun hat. Caution is justified: the plot of *The Testaments* is the closest-guarded secret in publishing since Harry Potter lived (again). Imposers posing as book agents tried to steal the digital manuscript, so publishers around the world agreed

to go analog. Rare copies were distributed under fake names, like *The Casements* by Victoria Locket.

Atwood famously wrote part of *The Handmaid's Tale* in Cold War–era Berlin, influenced by the fog of distrust that shrouded the East. That same atmosphere propels the sequel, which is narrated by three women. One was raised in Gilead, too young at its rise to remember a life before it; another is a Canadian teen with a past she has yet to understand; the third is Aunt Lydia, a villain in the regime and the only one of the three to have appeared in the foreground of *The Handmaid's Tale*. In swift prose—lightened by winking references to American history, like a café named for anti–Equal Rights Amendment activist Phyllis Schlafly—Atwood weaves together three distinct narratives to chronicle the rise and fall of Gilead.

Over the course of several interviews, Atwood doles out measured tidbits about her experience writing the book. She admits to feeling some nerves about the highly anticipated project but closes the topic with a pat “What is life without challenges?” She often veers toward history and deadpans jokes; she’s not a “Dear Diary–type of person,” she says. When asked how she feels about the excitement surrounding *The Testaments*, she offers a few words but soon dives into a lesson on Icelandic manuscripts. Before describing her path to writing in terms of the politics of the 1940s and ’50s, she pauses to ask when I was born. “That’s hilarious,” she says. “You remember nothing.”

Atwood’s talent for capturing history’s tendency to repeat itself has led some to call her a prophet. (She insists she’s not—just ask her old colleagues at the market-research firm where she declared Pop-Tarts would never take off.) Certain scenes from *The Testaments*—children ripped from the arms of their parents, flights across borders, inhumane detention centers—track closely with today’s headlines. But Atwood can point to multiple historical examples for each. She has a rule that each of the dark circumstances, rules and customs in *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Testaments* and the TV show, which range from genocide to ritual rape, must have a historical precedent. “I didn’t want people saying, like some have said, ‘How did you make up all this twisted stuff?’”

She sees her role as the person who drops a flare on the highway—she wrote the new book in part because she worries the world is trending more toward Gilead than away from it. A child of the ’30s, Atwood sees authoritarianism tightening its grip in Europe, but also in leading U.S. Republicans’ response to election interference: “It just does not compute,” she says. “Unless of course what they really want is an authoritarian regime. If that’s what they really want, spit it out: ‘We hate democracy.’”

Yet even in Atwood’s darkest writing, optimism prevails. Both Gilead novels end with scenes that

ATWOOD'S EXPANDING ONSCREEN UNIVERSE



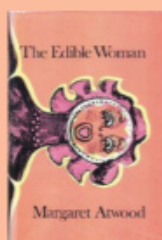
THE TESTAMENTS

MGM and Hulu will develop the new book for the screen, working with *Handmaid's Tale* showrunner Bruce Miller



ALIAS GRACE

In 2017, Netflix premiered a miniseries based on Atwood's 1996 novel about a 19th century murder case



THE EDIBLE WOMAN

This summer, eOne secured TV rights to Atwood's debut novel, about a woman who can no longer eat

indicate common sense has triumphed. Their narrators record their stories for the benefit of history, a perspective that leaves room to hope for a better world. “If you are reading,” Atwood writes in Lydia’s determined voice, “this manuscript at least will have survived.”

ONE AUTUMN, AS ATWOOD was sweeping leaves outside her Toronto mansion, the man next door told her people refer to her as the “wicked witch” of the neighborhood. (The broom didn’t help.) Her mythology precedes her. Bruce Miller, the *Handmaid's* showrunner, remembers every head turning as she entered a restaurant. When someone at the table asked her what it’s like to be a national treasure, she offered a perfectly Atwood response: “Exhausting.”

The author exists in a surreal intersection between her image and her life’s more stark realities, where caring for loved ones often takes precedence. Her partner, the novelist Graeme Gibson, is living with dementia. The morning after a doctor’s visit, Atwood runs through to-dos in the basement office in her home: there are appointments to schedule and bills to pay, a condo dispute to chase. (She stays in caretaking mode with me: “You were a naughty person, you didn’t eat any muffins,” she scolds, then sends me off with banana bread.)

Atwood has never been the type for superstitious writing rituals. She wrote *The Testaments* in hotels around the world, on trains and planes, wherever the phone couldn’t ring. Gibson wanted to re-create a voyage from his youth, traveling by ship to Australia. So Atwood did the first edit of *The Testaments* over the 21 days at sea while he slept.

She has a list of things she’d like to do but wonders if she’s too old: trek across Baffin Island, travel to Africa. She won’t say for sure whether she’ll write more Gilead novels (fans: it’s not a no)—in fact, she’s not much for discussing her future at all. Someday, she acknowledges, she’ll be “forcibly” retired. But she takes aging in stride. “There’s a lot of respect that comes with being the me that people recognize,” she says. “But if it’s the me that people don’t recognize, I’m just another old lady.”

In her office, Atwood strides past shelves of her archives—first editions, foreign translations, the original art from the best-known *Handmaid's Tale* cover—pulling an item here and there to give away. Later she’ll meditate on the meaning behind our choices of what we keep and what we discard. What she’s really talking about is legacy, what we leave behind and how it may one day prove useful to our “Dear Readers,” whoever they may be. She asks me how many love letters from 1961 she should keep, and I suggest she hold on to the ones that speak to her, missing the point. “I don’t think it matters whether they speak to me or not,” she says. “Whether they speak is more interesting.” □



RYAN MURPHY BUILT A NEW HEARTLAND

The renegade writer-producer-director's Netflix deal is worth \$300 million. Inside the making of his blockbuster empire

● BY SAM LANSKY

RYAN MURPHY IS TAKING A RARE BREATHER. WE'RE in his tidy trailer on a set in Hollywood, at the end of the last day of shooting for *The Boys in the Band*, a play that Murphy revived on Broadway in 2018 and is now producing as a feature film for Netflix. Outside, the studio lot is surprisingly sedate. A golf cart whirs past. A colleague brings him a single shot of espresso. Murphy, 53, schedules his days into short intervals—15 minutes, or 30—and works seven days a week. “I say I can’t keep going at this pace,” he says. “But then I have a full physical, and it’s like, I’m fine.”

For someone with at least 15 projects in the

works, he’s unusually hands-on with all of them: writing, directing and producing. He still has two shows on Fox—*9-1-1* and an upcoming spin-off—and three on the cable network FX: *Pose*, *American Horror Story* and a new installment of *American Crime Story*, which will follow the Monica Lewinsky scandal. That would be a busy slate for anyone—but this is the peak-content era, where each day seems to bring news of another creator defecting from established studios and networks to streaming services—whether heavyweights like Netflix, Amazon and Hulu or upcoming launches such as Apple TV+,

Disney+ and HBO Max—with the promise of capacious budgets and creative freedom. Murphy is, by the numbers, the biggest: last year he departed Fox, his longtime home, for an unprecedented deal with Netflix, valued at \$300 million—the most lucrative TV pact in history.

For the streamer, he's been developing a new roster of projects, at a scale, scope and variety that's unmatched even in the Wild West of the content boom. He is prepping the Sept. 27 release of *The Politician*, a sharp, crackling series about an ambitious young man, played by Ben Platt, running for high school office. He's editing *Ratched*, a moody origin story about *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*'s Nurse Ratched, starring Sarah Paulson. (The show is a disturbing midcentury tone poem set on the California coast, with a scene-stealing supporting performance by Sharon Stone.) He's adapting two Broadway musicals for the screen: *A Chorus Line* will unfold as a 10-part miniseries, and *The Prom*, a feature, will star Meryl Streep and Nicole Kidman. He takes great pleasure in casting, especially when it comes to megawatt movie stars, many of whom he now counts as friends. ("I have everyone's phone number but Meryl Streep's," he says. "There's everybody, and then there's Meryl.")

Hollywood, featuring Patti LuPone and Holland Taylor, will debut in May and "look at Hollywood and the sex industry, and how absolutely everything has changed and nothing has changed." And he's making a miniseries about the designer Halston, with Ewan McGregor playing the couturier.

Then there are the documentaries: *A Secret Love* is about a closeted lesbian couple who came out in their 80s. There's also a "big, flashy 10-part series" about Andy Warhol, whom people see only as "this sort of queen, so who's the real person who made all this stuff that changed all of our lives?" And he's making a docuseries about the most stylish people in the world, because he loved year-end lists as a kid. "Who's in? Who's out? Who's the most?"

Oh, and also: "Jessica Lange and I are working on a piece about Marlene Dietrich in Vegas in the early '60s," he says. "But I'm so booked. When am I going to do it? I don't know." He sighs and looks momentarily beleaguered. "I'm only into April of next year's calendar."

MURPHY GREW UP in Indianapolis, in an era—and in a family—where it wasn't easy to be a gay kid with an artistic sensibility. His father, in particular, was tough on him: "He would ask me, 'Why aren't you like me?'" he remembers. "I was constantly in existential crisis about who I was." Although Murphy reconciled with his father before he died—and has softened now that he has two children of his own, with husband David Miller—that rejection still smarts. "I never

HISTORY, REVISITED



HALSTON

Murphy is shepherding an upcoming miniseries about Roy Halston Frowick, the minimalist designer who defined the look and feel of the disco era, with Ewan McGregor in the title role



MARLENE DIETRICH

Jessica Lange—one of Murphy's favorite muses—will portray the German-American actor and singer during her later years performing in Las Vegas

got over that," he says, "and I probably never will."

Yet it may have ended up fueling his ambition. After moving to Los Angeles, he spent his 20s working as a journalist for outlets like the *Miami Herald* and the *Los Angeles Times* where, he says, he would churn out three stories a day, sharpening his work ethic. He sold his first show, *Popular*, to the WB in 1999 but butted heads with network executives. "I wasn't allowed to have a gay character," he says flatly. "They told me that I didn't understand the tone of it. I was like, 'It's my show!'" And although he worked steadily—creating the cult hit *Nip/Tuck* for FX and adapting and directing best-selling memoirs *Running With Scissors* and *Eat Pray Love* as feature films—he didn't always feel supported. "All the guys in power were straight white men," he says. "J.J. Abrams and I came up at the same time, but I never got those calls—because you mentor people who act like you and talk like you, and share your points of reference." That earned him a reputation. "I was seen as a fighter," he says. "I wouldn't take no for an answer." His creative sensibility was provocative and breakneck, marrying satirical elements with earnest drama, which divided critics.

Then came a string of hits, all of which, he says, everyone thought would never work: He created Fox's prime-time musical *Glee* in 2009, which—with tours, merchandising and a reality-show spin-off—became an asset worth hundreds of millions of dollars. For FX he dreamed up *American Horror Story* in 2011, one of the first series to function as an anthology, reimagining the show anew each season. For HBO he directed an adaptation of Larry Kramer's play *The Normal Heart* in 2014, which won him an Emmy and earned eight more nominations. And for FX in 2016, he retold the O.J. Simpson saga in *American Crime Story*, earning the best reviews of his career. "After those four things," he says, "it was like, Whatever you want to do, you can do."

In his newfound seat of power, he realized he'd derived the most fulfillment from working with people who hadn't traditionally been in the spotlight—whether that was actresses of a certain age or trans women of color—and decided to double down on this as his ethos. "Everything I'm working on is about one idea—taking marginalized characters and putting them in the leading story," he says. Dana Walden, now head of Disney Television and ABC, championed his work at Fox for this very reason. "Ryan tells stories about outsiders, but his shows are so commercial and shiny," she says. "I cannot tell you what a hard needle that is to thread."

His efforts have coincided with a larger movement to make Hollywood a more equitable, safe and inclusive place. This has been spurred on by two big reckonings: the first, around sexual misconduct and gender discrimination, and the second, a call for diversity in front of and behind the camera. "The



thing that I had been peddling suddenly became very desirable,” he says. But his investment in inclusion isn’t cynical: it’s rooted in his own pain, this desire to become the head of his own makeshift family. “I’m being the father who says, ‘You’re enough,’ which no one ever said to me,” he says. “I’ll spend hours in negotiations to get actors—especially women and minorities—more money than they’ve ever had.” Case in point: his collaborator Janet Mock, who wrote, produced and directed episodes of *Pose*, recently signed a multimillion-dollar deal with Netflix, making her the first trans woman with an overall pact at a major media company. “He puts a lot of wind beneath the wings of the people he believes in,” says Paulson. “I don’t think anyone ever did that for Ryan.”

By bolstering his colleagues, Murphy also benefits—he’s built a community of colleagues who are fiercely loyal to him. Yet he’s still driven by his need to belong and to be valued by the Establishment. “My whole life has been in search of that brass ring, and now somebody actually thinks I’m worthy as opposed to being an aberration?” he says. “People are astounded that I still want that. But everyone wants to be seen. Everyone wants to be loved.”

A FEW DAYS LATER, at a photo shoot in Culver City, Murphy stands before shelves lined with two dozen hats a stylist has pulled: wide-brimmed chapeaus in rose and silver, lilac and camel. He ends up not wearing any of them.

^
*Paltrow returns to acting with a juicy role in Murphy’s *The Politician*, as the mom of a scheming teen (Platt)*

But glamorous excess still reigns, both in his life and on *The Politician*, his first show for Netflix, which might be the Ryan Murphiest show Ryan Murphy has ever made. You want shocking violence, Machiavellian

teens, withering one-liners, Gwyneth Paltrow having an affair with a horse trainer played by Martina Navratilova, musical numbers, Munchausen syndrome by proxy, and Jessica Lange in gold lamé? That might sound like a lot. But it’s also calibrated for a mass audience—because Murphy’s sensibility has become the sensibility of the mainstream.

“His work is a reflection of his own interests and sensibilities, but it’s broader than that,” says Cindy Holland, who runs original programming at Netflix. “He’s absorbing influences in pop culture to create these unique collages that appeal to many different groups.” Critics have rallied behind some of his projects while dinging others, but he challenges the narrative that certain shows, like his Emmy-sweeping opus *The People v. O.J. Simpson*, are more restrained on purpose. “That show is outrageous!” he says. “John Travolta’s eyebrows are outrageous! There was a whole makeover episode! I never change.”

If he is too much, it has proved to be an asset—too much is exactly what people want. “Call me camp,” Murphy says. “Call me crazy. Call me wild. Call me extreme. Call me erratic. The one thing you can’t say is that I don’t try.” He thinks about it for a second and smiles wickedly. “Actually, I don’t care what you call me,” he says. “As long as you call me.” □



**‘EVERYONE
WANTS TO
BE SEEN.
EVERYONE
WANTS TO
BE LOVED.’**



MICHAEL B. JORDAN IS MORE THAN A HERO

Our next great movie star is making
Hollywood inclusive—onscreen and off

● BY KARA BROWN

THE STOREFRONT ENTRANCE OF THE UNDERGROUND Museum, on a busy street in central Los Angeles, is easy to miss. Inside, it feels like somebody's stylish home: there are shelves lined with books, framed art and baskets of records. The museum was launched in 2012 with the mission to bring museum-quality art to a community—and neighborhood—that previously had little access to it. Beyoncé has been spotted, John Legend used the space to launch an album, and Barry Jenkins hosted a screening of *Moonlight* here.

Michael B. Jordan has never been here before, but

once he arrives—wearing a blindingly white T-shirt and a friendly grin—he can't get enough. As we walk around, he pulls out his phone to make a note about one of the exhibits so he can look it up later. He doesn't exactly fidget, but there's an anxious energy to him even as he sits still on a bench in the spacious garden. When he wants to make a point, he leans in and looks down, concentrating, wanting to get the words right. "I'm a naturally quiet person," he says. "Actions speak louder than words."

For Jordan, it's easier to inhabit a role than to talk about it. But there's a lot to discuss when it comes



^
Jordan and Foxx, left, star as Stevenson and McMillian, seen at right after McMillian's release in 1993

to his next film, *Just Mercy*, an adaptation of Bryan Stevenson's best-selling memoir, in which Jordan stars as the activist lawyer. Directed by Destin Daniel Cretton, the movie chronicles the early days of Stevenson's Equal Justice Initiative, as he defended wrongfully incarcerated death-row inmates. *Just Mercy* premieres at the Toronto International Film Festival on Sept. 6 before hitting theaters in December in the thick of awards season. The film, which Jordan also produced, reveals the ways in which law enforcement and the judicial system unfairly target and punish people of color, as brought to life by the true story of Walter McMillian (Jamie Foxx), an inmate set to be executed for a crime he didn't commit. As Stevenson attempts to clear his name, he uncovers the racist conspiracy that led to McMillian's wrongful conviction. "It's a system that preys on people of color, people who are poor, who are uneducated," Jordan says. "When you leave this movie, I want you to question what you think is normal."

Jordan got his start in intimate, character-driven dramas that illuminate stories some viewers might sideline, before he turned to blockbusters. And

yet—though *Just Mercy*'s heroism is expressed through the filing of legal briefs, not heart-pounding action sequences—it's a continuation of themes that Jordan has worked with before: humanizing the misunderstood and shining a spotlight on inequality. It's why Stevenson trusted Jordan with his story. "Films don't always carry the message of a book in an authentic way, and that was my anxiety," Stevenson says. "But I felt like he was sensitive to more challenging stories of life in America." While Jordan says he didn't previously have a firm opinion on the death penalty, as a black man in America—and one whose father was active in the Black Panther Party and whose uncle was in the Nation of Islam—he understands how issues like mass incarceration and unjust criminalization affect people. "Bryan dedicated his life to criminal-justice reform," he says. "I wanted to get behind that story."

That's why Jordan might be our next and last great movie star: he has the box-office bona fides and the leading-man good looks, but his movies, for the most part, all say something, even the popcorn flicks. In a moment when it's nearly impossible to

NEXT UP FOR MICHAEL B. JORDAN



WITHOUT REMORSE
Jordan will star in an adaptation of Tom Clancy's 1993 novel, set in the Jack Ryan universe



JOURNAL FOR JORDAN
Denzel Washington will direct Jordan as a soldier separated from his family during the Iraq War

JUST MERCY: WARNER BROS.; MCMILLIAN AND STEVENSON: COURTESY EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE; WASHINGTON, COOGLER, JAMES: GETTY IMAGES

predict where Hollywood is heading—and who can successfully draw in audiences—Jordan is as close as you can get to a sure thing. For him, this was always the goal. “How you make the most impact is: become the biggest,” he says. “Build your brand so it’s global, so you can attack global issues. Every move matters.”

LIKE MANY MOVIE STARS before him, Jordan got his start in television. Born in Santa Ana, Calif., and raised in Newark, N.J., he worked as an actor on shows like *Parenthood*, *Friday Night Lights* and *The Wire*, in which he had a small but significant role as the teenage drug dealer Wallace. His performance in *Fruitvale Station* as Oscar Grant, an unarmed man killed by a Bay Area police officer, brought him wider attention and marked his first collaboration with director Ryan Coogler. The pair next worked together on a *Rocky* spin-off, *Creed*, but with *Black Panther*, Jordan became a household name. His portrayal of antagonist Erik Killmonger earned him praise for its nuance—he was the rare villain with whom many viewers actually sided. *Black Panther* is now the 11th highest-grossing movie of all time and the first superhero film ever to earn a Best Picture nomination at the Oscars. (He’ll team up with Coogler again for a dramatization of the true story of how Atlanta high school teachers participated in a standardized-test cheating scandal, based on a 2014 article, with a script by Ta-Nehisi Coates.) Jordan is selective about whom he aligns with professionally: “It was never a money play,” he says. “If I was trying to cash out, I probably would have done more movies.”

In 2016 he launched a production company, Outlier Society, which isn’t unusual for promising young stars like Jordan. But after Frances McDormand gave a viral acceptance speech in 2018 at the Academy Awards, highlighting the importance of inclusion riders—contract clauses that can be requested by actors to ensure that a project’s cast and crew meet certain diversity standards—Jordan wanted this to be a part of his mission. When he was being courted by Warner Bros. to sign a deal with his company, he asked that any resulting projects meet this standard. WarnerMedia, the studio’s parent company, which also owns HBO and Turner, ended up working with Jordan and his team to develop a policy to be used across projects company-wide, whether they were associated with him or not. “For me, that was the big first step,” he says. “Hopefully, it’s going to set

precedents across the board—other studios, other production companies want to get in on the same wave.” WarnerMedia promised to release an annual report with data about the diversity of its projects, a gesture of transparency in an often opaque industry.

Just Mercy is the first project made under those new directives, and Jordan hopes it highlights the continued need for more inclusion in Hollywood. “Building bridges is cool,” he says. “I was building tunnels for a long time. It’s still going to get you to the other side—you’re just not going to see them moving.” In this way, his strategy was different from that of other young voices in Hollywood—particularly young black stars like Issa Rae and Lena Waithe—who declared their intentions to disrupt the industry early on. As Jordan has become more outspoken, he wants to collaborate with like-minded colleagues. “What’s the version of it where it’s like, Donald Glover, Issa, myself, Lena, whatever? That hasn’t been a thing yet,” he says. (He laughs when I suggest that he just send a group text.) Yet he knows Hollywood is always looking to justify its risk aversion. “If that’s a movie, it has to be a sure thing,” he says. “Because if it’s not, and that opening weekend isn’t as impressive, it makes it harder for the next one—for everyone involved.”

JORDAN IS A GENTLEMAN: on more than one occasion, he leapt in front of me—really, leapt—to open doors, like he was conscious of a certain type of chivalry, and aware of its effects. But despite his charisma, his bigger aspirations are behind the camera. “I see a world where I’m just directing,” he says. “Or maybe doing a movie once every two or three years.” Yet the next few years will be busy: *Without Remorse* is out in 2020, and he’ll star in *Journal for Jordan*, directed by Denzel Washington, who’s emerged as a mentor for him. Like Washington, Jordan wants to be a role model for the next generation. “I’m in these group chats with a lot of different actors and young talent,” Jordan says. “Miles Brown is awesome. Caleb McLaughlin’s on his way up too.”

He knows that the relationships he’s making will have implications not just for his own career but for the industry as a whole. And with *Just Mercy*, he’s hoping there’s an impact that reaches far beyond the film’s box-office take. “I want people to feel angry, upset, passionate, sad, inspired and optimistic,” he says, “that you can make a difference.” □



**‘BUILDING
BRIDGES
IS COOL.
I WAS
BUILDING
TUNNELS
FOR A
LONG
TIME.’**



WRONG ANSWER

He’ll reteam with longtime collaborator Ryan Coogler for this film about a standardized-test scandal



**BLACK LEOPARD,
RED WOLF**

His Outlier Society will produce an adaptation of Marlon James’ best-selling fantasy novel

CALENDAR

BOOKS

TELEVISION

FILM

From Mr. Rogers on the big screen to *Star Wars* on the small, the autumn's most anticipated titles in film, television and books

UNBELIEVABLE

Sept. 13

Based on Pulitzer Prize-winning journalism, this miniseries follows a teen (Kaitlyn Dever) charged with falsely reporting a rape, while two detectives in another state (Toni Collette and Merritt Wever) investigate a series of assaults that share eerily similar details. (Netflix)

HUSTLERS

Sept. 13

In 2015, *New York* published a story about strippers who conned Wall Street fat cats. Constance Wu and Jennifer Lopez star in this adaptation alongside Cardi B, a former stripper herself.



RED AT THE BONE

Jacqueline Woodson
Sept. 17

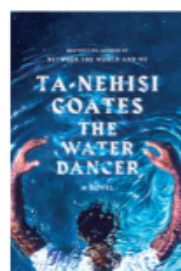
The latest adult novel from Woodson, author of the award-winning middle-grade memoir *Brown Girl Dreaming*, traces the impact of an unplanned teenage pregnancy on three generations of a black American family.

AD ASTRA

Sept. 20

A space engineer (Brad Pitt) ventures to the outer edges of the solar system to

track down his father (Tommy Lee Jones), who disappeared on a similar mission 20 years earlier.



THE WATER DANCER

Ta-Nehisi Coates
Sept. 24

In June, the award-winning author of *Between the World and Me* made a powerful testimony to Congress on reparations and what is owed to black Americans. His debut novel examines the country's racist past through the eyes of a young slave who makes the dangerous decision to escape his Virginia plantation following a near-death experience.

MAKE IT SCREAM, MAKE IT BURN

Leslie Jamison

Sept. 24

These 14 essays cover subjects ranging from the Sri Lankan civil war to lonely whales, pulling from Jamison's experiences to explore questions like "Why do we want what we can't have?"

MIXED-ISH

Sept. 24

The *black-ish* universe expands with a prequel set in the 1980s about young Bow (played as an adult by Tracee Ellis Ross) when her family moves from a hippie commune to the suburbs. (ABC)

THE DUTCH HOUSE

Ann Patchett

Sept. 24

In her follow-up to 2016's *Commonwealth*, Patchett again explores the tenuous nature of familial bonds. This time, the story follows a pair of siblings whose lives are upended when their father remarries.

JUDY

Sept. 27

Renée Zellweger plays a struggling Judy Garland, decades after *The Wizard of Oz*, who takes on a run of London performances that would turn out to be among her last.



GODFATHER OF HARLEM

Sept. 29

Oscar winner Forest Whitaker plays the infamous '60s crime boss Bumpy Johnson, struggling to retake the streets of Harlem after his release from prison. (Epix)



JOKER

Oct. 4

Joaquin Phoenix steps into a role played by Jack Nicholson, Heath Ledger and many others for an origin story that imagines the villain as an aspiring comedian.

BATWOMAN

Oct. 6

Orange Is the New Black star Ruby Rose will play television's first openly lesbian superhero in a series that expands the DC Comics small-screen repertoire. (The CW)

GEMINI MAN

Oct. 11

Brokeback Mountain director Ang Li uses CG visual effects to pit Will Smith, playing an aging government assassin, against a younger version of himself—a clone created 25 years ago.

CELESTIAL BODIES

Jokha Alharthi

Oct. 15

Three Omani sisters grapple with love and loss as the oil industry takes hold of their country. The novel is the first to be originally published in Arabic and win the Man Booker International Prize.

OLIVE, AGAIN

Elizabeth Strout

Oct. 15

A new set of interlinking stories welcomes readers back to Crosby, Maine, the home of retired schoolteacher

Olive Kitteridge, the protagonist of Strout's Pulitzer-winning 2008 novel. In them, she forges connections with a cast of characters, both new and old, from a grieving teen to an overwhelmed lawyer.

LOOKING FOR ALASKA

Oct. 18

The duo behind *The O.C.* and *Gossip Girl* adapts this young-adult novel by John Green (*The Fault in Our Stars*), about a teen who falls for a mysterious classmate named Alaska Young. (Hulu)

JOJO RABBIT

Oct. 18

Writer-director Taika Waititi's dark comedy features the filmmaker as a bumbling Adolf Hitler, an imaginary friend to a member of the Nazi Youth during World War II who discovers his mother

(Scarlett Johansson) is hiding a Jewish girl in their home.



FIND ME

André Aciman

Oct. 29

Following the success of the 2017 movie adaptation of *Call Me by Your Name*, this sequel picks up years after the central pair first met, with Elio in Paris as Oliver, back in America, considers a trip to Europe.

HARRIET

Nov. 1

Cynthia Erivo plays the legendary abolitionist Harriet Tubman, who escaped from slavery and went on to help free hundreds of slaves through the Underground Railroad.

THE IRISHMAN

Nov. 1

Martin Scorsese directs Robert De Niro (for the ninth time) alongside Al Pacino and Joe Pesci in the story of the hit man Frank Sheeran, who was rumored to have carried out the infamous mob hit of Teamster leader Jimmy Hoffa.

IN THE DREAM HOUSE

Carmen Maria Machado

Nov. 5

Each chapter of this memoir from the 2017 National Book Award finalist is guided by a specific narrative trope—the haunted house, the unreliable narrator—to explore her experiences in an abusive relationship with another woman.

THE MANDALORIAN

Nov. 12

Disney launches its streaming service with the first live-action *Star Wars* TV series, in which *Game of Thrones*' Pedro Pascal plays a gunfighter who operates at the outer edges of the galaxy. (Disney+)

CHARLIE'S ANGELS

Nov. 15

Elizabeth Banks directs this new addition to the franchise that began with a late-'70s TV series and lots of feathered hair. Kristen Stewart, Naomi Scott and Ella Balinska play the formidable trio.



QUEEN & SLIM

Nov. 27

This modern-day *Bonnie and Clyde* story from writer Lena Waithe follows a man and a woman (Daniel Kaluuya and Jodie Turner-Smith) whose first date turns disastrous when a traffic stop leads to the death of an aggressive white cop. The pair takes off, becoming wanted enemies to some and folk heroes to others.

FROZEN 2

Nov. 22

Disney's sequel to the smash hit 2013 animated film finds Anna (Kristen Bell), Elsa (Idina Menzel) and their anthropomorphic friends traveling north to search for the source of ice queen Elsa's magic.

>

A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Nov. 22

Just over half a century after Mr. Rogers' TV show debuted, this drama inspired by a 1998 *Esquire* profile sees

Tom Hanks slipping into his red sweater and genial charm.

HIS DARK MATERIALS

TBA

HBO is ready to fill the *Game of Thrones*-size hole in your heart: the network has teamed with the BBC to adapt Philip Pullman's beloved fantasy novels about a girl caught in a battle between religious zealots and scientists.



THE MORNING SHOW

TBA

Co-Producers Reese Witherspoon and Jennifer Aniston star alongside Steve Carell in this series about behind-the-scenes drama and gender dynamics at a morning news show. (Apple TV+)



6 Questions

Gina Rippon The British cognitive researcher on why male and female brains aren't so different, explored in her book *Gender and Our Brains*

A popular notion has it that a human being's most important sex organ is the brain. You say it's our behavior that's different; our brains are strikingly similar. Why? This goes all the way back to Charles Darwin, who said that women are inferior because they have inferior brains and therefore they do not have the right to assume a powerful role in society. But the bottom line is there is no consistent pattern or structure which reliably characterizes the brain so that we could say, "O.K., that's a female brain and that's a male brain."

But we don't have to be talking about inferior or superior brains—just different brains. Absolutely. Some critics have called people like myself sex-difference deniers, like climate deniers. There are sex differences that we should pay attention to, but the power that's attributed to biology is what needs challenging. We have to pay more attention to how our experiences drive our brain architecture. It's a bit like trees that grow on windy plains. Their biological drivers make them grow upward, but the winds make them twist or grow branches on only one side.

Is this what you mean by the "pink and blue tsunami" you write about in your book? Yes, and it starts early. There was a BBC program called *No More Boys and Girls*, and they showed a classroom with a blue cupboard for the boys' coats and a pink cupboard for the girls', and no one knew why. It suggests that there's something so important about your sex that you have to hang your coat somewhere else.

You're open about the fact that you hate gender-reveal parties. I've called them jaw-droppingly awful. Twenty weeks before children even arrive, people are already stressing about how important it is to be a boy or a girl.

EXPERIENCES
DRIVE BRAIN
ARCHITECTURE.
IT'S A BIT LIKE
TREES THAT GROW
ON WINDY PLAINS



A lot of parents work hard to raise their kids without strict gender differences. Can that compete with the gender messages in the culture at large? Children are tiny social sponges, and it starts early. Little boys quickly pick up the fact that they shouldn't cry—that if they want to be on the football team, then, in British terms, stiff upper lip. Is that what you'd call it in America?

"Suck it up" is what we'd say. It's a little more vulgar. Yeah, but telling, actually.

If we can't lay gender differences off on brain structure, surely hormones play a role, don't they? They're obviously powerful, yes, but they're responsive to the social environment. Testosterone, for example, is not the one-directional driver people say it is. The father of a newborn baby who is the primary caregiver of the baby will have a much lower testosterone level than the father who is not the primary caregiver.

Rightly or wrongly, much has been written about women's empathy and collegiality and how the world would be more peaceful if there were more female heads of state. Do you agree? I think the best way forward would be gender irrelevance. If good leaders need to be empathic, networking, collegial, then let's encourage that. If good leaders need to be assertive, thick-skinned, able to make rapid decisions, let's encourage that too.

You spend little time in your book on transgender people. How come?

I don't do research in that area, and I think you need to be a genuine authority. I've been contacted by transgender males or females who ask, "Can you put me in a scanner and prove my brain is male or female?" I say, I'm sorry, there isn't any such thing. I can't say your brain is all pinks or blues. In fact, I wanted to call my book *Fifty Shades of Gray Matter*. —JEFFREY KLUGER



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